

# **Even Anchors Need Lifelines**

Public Libraries In Adult Literacy

A Study by Gail Spangenberg  
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Since 1993, through Spangenberg Learning Resources, Gail Spangenberg has directed a variety of studies and organizational planning and development projects. Her clients have included such diverse groups as Chemical Bank, U.S. Basics, The DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, the British Broadcasting Corporation, the Hewlett Foundation, New York Theatre Ballet, and the U.S. Department of Education. In 1994, for the Library's new President, she conducted a study of the New York Public Library's adult literacy program.

In the early 1980s, Ms. Spangenberg helped establish the Business Council for Effective Literacy and as its Vice President and Operating Head from 1983 to 1993 she was responsible for development and management of BCEL's policies, publications, and other adult literacy programs and services.

Before that she was Program Officer and Consultant to the Ford Foundation and Senior Consultant to Carnegie Corporation and the Russell Sage Foundation. At Ford, she had responsibility for grant programs in nontraditional and urban higher education, adult education and literacy, and educational technology. She developed the Ford Foundation project which produced McGraw-Hill's book *Adult Illiteracy In America*, by Carmen St. John Hunter and David Harman. She also spearheaded Ford's involvement in the BBC's pioneering national adult literacy campaign in the United Kingdom.

In the early 1980s she developed a major paper on adult literacy for the Carnegie Corporation, and for the Russell Sage Foundation she developed and implemented a range of management and computer systems, including that organization's social science research library and information services.

Ms. Spangenberg has served on many state and national literacy task forces, planning committees, and advisory boards, including the Definition Committee of the National Adult Literacy Survey conducted by the Educational Testing Service and the U.S. Department of Education, the ESL Adult Literacy Clearinghouse of the Center for Applied Linguistics, the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment's 1990 study titled *Worker Training: Competing in the New International Economy*, and numerous studies of workplace literacy for the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis. In her position at BCEL, she commissioned the Southport Institute study which led to creation of the National Literacy Act.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The research underlying *Even Anchors Need Lifelines* makes one fact crystal clear: Though too little recognized and appreciated, public library adult literacy services are a vital part of the national adult literacy system, serving hundreds of thousands of adult Americans in thousands of programs across the country.

It also underscores a bizarre irony: Just as they have become an established force in literacy, public library literacy programs find themselves poised at the edge of a financial precipice. Earmarked federal funding for them has been cut. And there are very grave doubts that they will be able to compete for education or literacy funds provided through state block grants.

This report thus begins and ends on an uncertain note. It can turn out to be the postmortem for a major part of the public library adult literacy field. Or it can be the spark that ignites the imagination and action so urgently needed to preserve that field and lay a base for developing its future role. Which it will be depends on what state librarians, public libraries and library associations, adult literacy groups, public and private funding agencies, and political leaders decide to do about the main findings and recommendations. In particular, it depends on what they are prepared to do *immediately* about the funding crisis that confronts the public libraries.

This report is organized into seven sections, each focused on a single area of research, and an eighth section (beginning on page 116) which contains the main conclusions and 19 priority recommendations.

Two recommendations in Section 8 address the most urgent funding need. One calls for the prompt restoration of earmarked funding for library literacy programming—at the federal level, in state block grants, or both. The other challenges the philanthropic community to help meet the short-term funding need so that professionals and programs in the field can maintain their balance while planning for the future.

Gail Spangenberg

# INTRODUCTION

## THE CONTEXT

After more than a decade of solid advances in policy development, research, and service outreach, the movement against adult functional illiteracy in the U.S. appears to be in retreat.

School-to-work transition efforts and family literacy have been the steady focus of the present administration, but other components on the adult literacy spectrum have faded from attention.

Furthermore, federal literacy funding for many strands of adult literacy (homeless programs, workplace literacy partnerships, and state literacy resource centers) has evaporated almost overnight, and more setbacks are likely, especially if state block grants are implemented.

The retreat is alarming and philosophically hard to justify, for regardless of the political lens through which one looks, an extensive accumulation of evidence attests to a powerful connection between the basic skills proficiency of

Americans and the well-being of America.

The current climate makes it hard, in some ways impossible, to plan effectively for the future of adult literacy. And matters are made even worse by government down-sizing and ideological warfare on the political front. The result is that a growing number of adult literacy programs—long used to inadequate funding—are limping along as never before toward financial disaster—and adult literacy professionals are increasingly frustrated and discouraged.

It would be natural in the current hostile atmosphere for literacy planners and practitioners to take a wait-and-see approach. But that would *guarantee* even more losses, and there is simply too much at stake for that to be acceptable. Indeed, the very forces that make it hard to stand and fight make it imperative to do just that.

Determination, re-dedication, and boldness of vision are needed as

never before. So is openness to forging new liaisons, developing new voices, and finding opportunity in established avenues of service whose full potential has not yet been used.

## WHY THIS STUDY?

This library literacy study stems from a belief that the community-based public libraries are one of the strongest anchors for literacy education the nation could possibly have.

Public libraries have an organic presence in nearly every American town and city, ranking right up there with the local post office and the community college. They are deeply imbedded in the general public consciousness and have a permanence that many other organizations don't have.

Furthermore, it isn't hard to see that their reading and information services increasingly require a literate community of users.

In fact, it has been argued since the turn of the century that it is in the

best interest of public libraries, the general public they serve, *and* adult basic education for adult literacy services to be a central part of their mission. Indeed, in announcing this study, the executive director of the American Library Association declared that this educational service role “adds to the richness and relevance of libraries in communities throughout America.”

But it would be folly to advocate a stronger adult literacy role for public libraries without better understanding what they are already doing, what they think about that, and what factors will shape their current and future role.

How *do* state and local public libraries currently view the role of their institutions in adult basic education and literacy? What connections and understandings exist between public libraries and state and national planning groups, especially the state literacy resource centers legislated to have a central role in setting the statewide context? What

does actual public library involvement consist of now? What problems do state libraries and local public library literacy programs face as they look to the future? How well positioned *are* public libraries to take a stronger role in adult literacy service provision? What can be done to help them do this, assuming enough people agree that the goal is worthy?

*Even Anchors Need Lifelines* does not pretend to have complete answers to these questions. In fact, it will probably raise more questions than it answers. But the hope is that it will spark a new and more realistic appreciation of what the possibilities are and what work needs to be done to develop the public library role.

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## **SPONSORS & ADVISORS**

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This study was sponsored by The Center for the Book in The Library of Congress. It took place during a nine-month period between September 1995 and May 1996.

Grant support was provided by the National Institute for Literacy (\$11,000), Harold W. McGraw, Jr. (\$11,000), McGraw-Hill Companies Inc. (\$9,500), and the

American Library Association (\$5,000). Center for the Book costs were somewhere in the vicinity of \$15,000 excluding publication expenses. Spangenberg Learning Resources donated major staff and material resources to the undertaking.

Many people from across the country contributed their time and thinking to this report. There is hardly anything in it that is not theirs. They are acknowledged in Appendices A-C.

General acknowledgments are presented in Appendix A. Appendix B lists the people who served in various project advisory roles. Many wrote memoranda to assist with data analysis, and their thinking will be evident throughout the report. Appendix C lists the names and addresses of the nearly 200 professionals who provided the raw material for this study by filling out questionnaires. To facilitate networking, phone and fax numbers as well as e-mail addresses are given for Appendix B and C contributors.

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## **THE WORK PLAN**

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Following an initial definition period, the survey and analysis por-

tion of this study unfolded in a series of four discrete phases—interspersed with meetings, tracking of legislation, interviews, and other activities.

**Phase 1 - questionnaire design and mailing list development.** In September and October, questionnaires of varying length were designed, sent out for review, and customized for four different target groups: **chief officers of state library agencies (state librarians)...designated literacy contacts in those same state library agencies ...heads of state literacy resource centers...and local library literacy programs.**

Name and address lists were obtained from several sources as were nominations for local programs. The lists were found to be largely out of date, requiring extensive up-front telephone work to verify names, titles, and addresses.

The questionnaire for state librarians (Q1) consisted of five pages of general questions to probe their present thinking about the role of public libraries in adult literacy, and about matters of technology use, involve-

ment in state planning, and various funding and financial matters.

The questionnaire for state library agency literacy professionals (Q2, ten pages) included the same five pages sent to the state librarians plus five more. This was done to elicit more deeply detailed information and to learn whether state library agencies collect meaningful program data about local public library literacy programs.

In the main, Q1 and Q2 aimed to assess whether these important state agencies are providing significant leadership and support to local library literacy programs, and whether they could be a source of strong, new leadership as federal funding and power shifts to the states.

State Literacy Resource Centers were included as a third study strand (Q3, ten pages) because they were presumed to be the centrally important state level planning and resource entities envisioned in the National Literacy Act of 1991. As such, it was reasoned, they would have a key role in shaping the context in which public library literacy programs

operate, a role that should be understood better.

Some questions designed for SLRCs had to do with their perceptions about the status of public libraries as part of the statewide system for delivering adult literacy services. Others sought to examine the current and potential role and health of the SLRCs themselves.

In the fourth questionnaire for local library literacy programs (Q4, eight pages), some questions were the same as those asked of the first three groups while others were devoted to the specific purposes, features, and problems of the programs themselves. The primary goal was to discover the concerns and hopes of those who actually provide the services.

Questionnaires were sent to 82 local public library literacy programs in 32 states. The 63 responding programs are not a national sampling, but their experiences and circumstances are especially relevant because they are long established (9.9 years on average), are known to have solid track records, and have a

valuable accumulation of insights.

They were either nominated by national or state leadership organizations or selected by Spangenberg Learning Resources from three sources: research reports found in the ERIC database, the large pool of programs that have had multiple-year funding from the Office of Education Research & Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education, and programs reported on in various newsletters of the Business Council for Effective Literacy.

An effort was made to have geographic distribution and to include both small and large population areas.

**Phase 2 - questionnaire production and mailing.** During October and November, reproduction and color-coding of the questionnaires took place, letters of transmittal were written, and mailings went out. Additional literature was reviewed and telephone consultations were made.

**Phase 3 - telephone follow-up and other communications activities.** To improve the response

rate—and it did—extensive telephone follow-up occurred during December and January. Questionnaire returns were sorted and given preliminary review. Duplicate questionnaires were provided as necessary and clarifying consultations were held with many respondents.

**Phase 4 - data synthesis and analysis.** From February to May, data organization and analyses were done. In March, the data were prepared and sent to a panel of project advisors for review.

In addition, telephone interviews and informational calls were made to several national organizations: the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, the American Library Association, the U.S. Department of Education, the National Institute for Literacy, the Center for Applied Linguistics, the Public Library Data Service of the ALA, the National Clearinghouse for Adult Literacy/ESL Education, the National Center for Family Literacy, Laubach Literacy Action, and Literacy Volunteers of America.

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## PRESENTATION & OUTCOMES

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An immense amount of information was collected in this project. Over 2,000 pages of raw material were generated. That was boiled down to a data book of nearly 321 pages, which in turn was reduced to the 51 tables seen in this report. Every question asked in the survey is covered here, along with a parallel discussion and analysis of the responses.

The report is dense and too much to digest in a single reading. But it has been written to be read as easily as possible. Each section is self-contained and can be read apart from all the others, depending on the reader's interest. It can also be navigated with little attention to the tables or examined in a deeply studied way.

*[The reader can also begin at the end, with the Conclusions and Recommendations section starting on page 116. The main findings for each section are summarized there.](#)*

Sections 1-6 deal in turn with the broad

themes of the survey. Section 7 gives direct voice to the respondents themselves. It recaps and reinforces the analysis and findings discussed in 1-6. As noted, the main findings are presented in Section 8, along with conclusions and recommendations.

The report sections are as follows:

- 1. **The Public Library's Role** (p. 6)
- 2. **The Use & Limits Of Technology** (p. 18)
- 3. **Planning** (p. 35)
- 4. **Finance & Funding** (p. 48)
- 5. **State Level Program Data** (p. 61)
- 6. **Local Programs: The Heart Of The Matter** (p. 72)
- 7. **Lifblood Issues & Leadership** (p. 89)
- 8. **Conclusions & Recommendations** (p. 116)
- Appendices** (p. 126)

It should be noted that severe budget constraints placed major limits on this project. Detailed state-by-state comparisons, for instance, could not be performed—although such analysis

Q1	69% (35) of the state librarians themselves sent in completed returns. 24% (12) said that their agency's designated literacy contact speaks for them (CA, CO, LA, MA, MO, NY, OK, SC, VT, VA, WA, and WY). 8% (4) did not want to participate (AK, AZ, CT, NC).
Q2	85% (44) of state library agency literacy contacts responded. 14% (7) did not respond (AL, AZ, DC, NC, NV, RI, UT).
Q3	78% (40) of state literacy resource center heads (or their equivalents) responded. 22% (11) did not respond (AR, DC, GA, ID, MA, ME, NV, OR, RI, TX, WY).
Q4	77% (63) of the 82 nominated local public library literacy programs responded. 23% (19) did not respond (one arrived too late to be included).

is possible and would be useful and even necessary for some purposes.

For those who want to undertake deeper analyses of the findings, the complete study data will be published as a supplement to the report called *Even Anchors Need Lifelines: The Background Data*.

In addition, the Center for the Book may eventually issue some targeted resource publications for the field that draw on material in this report.

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### **SETTING THE STAGE**

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For this study, adult literacy is defined as *basic reading, writing, math, and ESL needed by adults to function in various contexts. Included are workplace/*

*workforce literacy and family literacy (where the focus of instruction is on parents).* The definition is consistent with that of the National Literacy Act.

The four groups questioned in the 50 states and the District of Columbia—chief officers of state library agencies, key literacy contacts in state libraries, heads of state literacy resource centers, and directors of local library literacy programs—are referred to either by those designations or Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4. This short-hand device was used in the full data book and is retained here to facilitate cross-referencing.

As the table above shows, the study achieved an extraordinarily high

This assemblage of data is remarkable, giving us information about library literacy programs incomparably more extensive and meaningful than we have ever had before. (Dan Lacy, Duke University, formerly of BCEL & McGraw-Hill, Inc.)

It is significant to have this much raw data in one place. It would have been useful to have this 5 to 10 years ago when the discussion of the role of libraries in literacy began to intensify. (Bridget Lamont, State Librarian, IL)

response rate—especially from the state library personnel. That is an important finding in itself, indicating a deep interest in the topic under study.

Although it took extensive staff work to produce such a strong response, the rate is nonetheless remarkable. These are very busy people in the best of economic times, and when this survey reached their desks they were unusually concerned about their institutions and programs—and still are—because of federal and state cutbacks.

Moreover, it was a real eye-opener to discover the extent to which project questionnaires had to compete with literally dozens of questionnaires from other sources—almost a public policy issue in itself.

The recipients in all groups are deluged with survey forms, day in and day out, from every imaginable source—for purposes that range from the grand to the frivolous. Most are trashed on arrival, and those kept for later attention are routinely relegated to the bottom of the work pile where they are apt to be

forgotten. Yet several people contacted during follow-up were grateful to be reminded because they genuinely *wanted* to participate.

It is worthy of note, too, that if the response rate for state literacy resource centers actually seems *low* given their presumed role—why not a 100% response rate here, asked one data reviewer—one of the most shocking things learned in the study is that at the time the data were being gathered, many SLRCs had already been forced by federal funding cuts to close or drastically curtail operations. The circumstances of most SLRCs remain very bleak. It is a story that needs attention in its own right.



# 1: THE PUBLIC LIBRARY'S ROLE

The basic purpose behind the questions of this first section of the study was to probe facts and attitudes about the mission and the current and future role of public libraries in adult literacy service provision.

The section looks at what is on the minds of state and local public library professionals with respect to mission and role and also at what state literacy resource center heads think about these matters.

It also probes some of the forces that affect the extent and nature of public library involvement in adult literacy—such as funding and state and national understanding. And it seeks to draw attention to the benefits of library literacy programming to the country in general and to public libraries in particular.

## MAJOR MISSION? A CAUTIOUS YES

Clearly, in R1, **the majority in all respondent categories think the provision of literacy services should be a major mission of public libraries.**

<b>R1: Should the provision of literacy services be a major mission of public libraries?</b> [Asked of groups Q1-Q4]		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Q1	State Librarians (35 of 35)	66%	26%	9%
Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts (37 of 44)	81	8	11
Q3	State Literacy Resource Center Heads (38 of 40)	74	16	11
Q4	Local Library Literacy Program Heads (63 of 63)	91	6	3

  

<b>R2: Are public library literacy programs a major component of your state's literacy-providing network now?</b> [Q3-Q4]		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Q3	SLRC Heads (38 of 40)	53%	42%	5%
Q4	Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	62	25	13

  

<b>R3: Is the development of library-based adult literacy programs a major mission of the state library agency now?</b> [Q1-Q4]		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Q1	State Librarians (35 of 35)	51%	43%	6%
Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts (36 of 44)	50	44	6
Q3	SLRC Heads (38 of 40)	29	55	16
Q4	Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	46	33	21

While this is highly encouraging news, it is also significant that one-fourth of the state librarians do *not* think so, despite decades of advocacy by both library and education leaders. Moreover, about 10% of the Q1-Q3 respondents are not sure—so that on balance, about one-third of the respondents are still unconvinced about the appropriateness and importance of literacy service. Several study advisors were quite alarmed by this discovery.

Responses to questions R2-R3 are somewhat at odds with the findings of R1. Although two-thirds of the library personnel say they consider literacy a major public library mission, half indicate that development of library-based adult literacy programs are *not presently* a major mission of the state agency. This indicates that while library professionals generally embrace the provision of literacy services as a legitimate and central role for public libraries, there is

a difference between what many of them say and what they do.

Beyond this, the high negative response rate to R3 by state library people was thought by one of this project's data reviewers "to be most detrimental to local library literacy programs that feel strongly about their role in their respective communities."

However, responses to question R3a suggest that **lack of funding at the state and federal level is**

by far the biggest reason for the apparent discrepancy. Lack of adequate staff resources, also cited several times as a reason, is basically a funding problem.

Furthermore, many R3a respondees feel that it is better for public libraries to support the literacy work of *others* than to have the basic responsibility themselves.

Adding a further twist to the situation, the data also suggest that some of the respondees may not really know the facts, signalling that **there is a communications problem within and among the different groups surveyed.**

For one thing, state librarians and the designated literacy professionals within their agencies differ markedly in their views about the role and present involvement of public libraries in adult literacy. For another, library agency respondees claim to be doing more to develop library literacy services than local library literacy programs think they are doing.

State literacy resource center heads think there is even less going on.

**R3a. Individuals responding that library-based literacy programs are NOT a major mission of the state library agency were asked to explain why, and to indicate if and when the agency plans to adopt or expand library literacy programming. [Q1-Q4]**

	Q1 (12 of 15 responded)	Q2 (10 of 16)	Q3 (17 of 22)	Q4 (15 of 21)
Lack of funding/ not enough staff resources/ budget cuts/federal cutbacks/ no state legislative attention	7	4	11	11
State library prefers to support the work of others in literacy; basic responsibility belongs to someone else; others are better equipped to provide literacy services	5	3	3	3
Literacy is just a low priority	1	1	2	2
Planning is now in process	1	1		
More interested in children's literacy	1			
State library gives LSCA grants to local libraries to address community needs they think are important	1			1
State library emphasis in on building collections		1		
Technology is the shining star			1	
Barbara Bush is no longer in office				1

**R4: In general, do you think that provision of literacy services in public libraries in the future should be more important, less important, or about the same as now? [Q1-Q4]**

	More Important	Less Important	The Same As Now
Q1 State Librarians (35 of 35)	60%	3%	37%
Q2 State Library Literacy Contacts (36 of 44)	81	0	19
Q3 SLRC Heads (37 of 40)	70	11	19
Q4 Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	84	0	16

Similarly, there is a sizable difference in the response of SLRC heads and local programs as to whether library literacy programs are presently a major component of their state's overall delivery system (with the latter more likely to think so).

Moreover, the high percentage of Q3 and Q4 respondees that are *not*

If public libraries are not concerned and/or do not take a strong leadership role in literacy and/or fail to see the need for a reading populace—people who understand and appreciate the value of reading, thus of libraries—then what *is* important to a public library? Having an A1 reference collection that no one uses because the literacy level in the community is so low that most people wouldn't know about it or care? (Betty Ann Scott, FL)

**R5. Given your view of literacy needs and services in the state, what new or expanded role might public libraries play to help meet the needs? Conversely, what role might be inappropriate for them because other organizations are better suited to it? [Q3, Q4]**

	Q3	Q4
	# of Times Mentioned	
<b>Coordination &amp; collaboration (to avoid duplication of services and stretch limited funding/resources):</b>		
Integrate/coordinate literacy work of libraries more closely with work of state departments of education, literacy program providers, and/or others at state, regional, and local levels responsible for literacy	14	12
Initiate more collaborative projects—sharing resources and expertise—with voluntary and community-based literacy groups, schools, social agencies, businesses	7	3
Participate more actively in statewide planning. Become full partners in literacy service delivery. Help build coalitions of interest. Serve as catalyst for bringing together literacy providers, potential adult learners, business and industry, and others	4	8
Work more closely with state literacy resource centers	6	
Be one of the “point” organizations for literacy in every community	1	
<b>Provide space and other resources for literacy instruction and tutor training programs of outside literacy groups:</b>		
Provide space/neutral sites/stigma free location for one-to-one or small group instruction/meetings/workshops	14	17
Help promote and recruit tutors and hard-to-reach students/ provide referrals, offer other outreach services	2	8
Open libraries for adult literacy instruction during weekday evenings	1	1
<b>Collection &amp; Materials Development</b>		
Provide/develop reading materials/collections for adult new readers	9	17
Develop/house training and instructional materials for tutors and tutor training purposes	2	
Help log/catalog the literacy program collections developed by SLRCs, local programs, and others into regional/state library databases to which all have access	2	
Facilitate inter-library loans	1	
Sponsor bookmobiles		1
<b>Take a more direct instruction/training role:</b>		
Directly provide literacy instructional services, especially when no other group in the community is doing it or when patrons want them	2	6
Provide a stable base for direct training of tutors (including the training of library personnel)	4	1
Offer CAI-learning programs	1	3
<b>Family literacy:</b>		
Increase focus on family literacy support/programs	4	8
Serve as an entry point for adults, through their children’s services	1	2

sure is another indicator of generally inadequate communications.

In R4, the vast majority of people say that they believe the provision of literacy services in public libraries should be more important in the future than now—though nearly two-thirds of state librarians would keep the level about the same. But this response, while encouraging on one level, is at odds with the heavy negative responses of R2-R3, again suggesting that many of the respondents are ambiguous about what they think. Note, however, that only 3% of the state librarians said that adult literacy services should be *reduced*. Amazingly, a relatively high 11% of the SLRC heads thought so.

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### THE CURRENT & FUTURE ROLES

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In question R5, SLRC and local program directors speak in fairly typical ways about the role of public libraries in adult literacy. Despite the changing financial circumstances of literacy and library groups, most of them think about the library’s role in terms of what already exists rather than what might be. The

call is largely for more of the same.

For example, a relatively large number of respondees indicate that the main service role of libraries should be to house one-on-one or small group volunteer tutoring programs for adults at the lowest basic skills levels. Data gathered in other parts of the study suggest that very many library-based programs do indeed have these elements, possibly the majority.

But these data also point to a wide range of eclectic programs and to

We have come a long way since the early 80s. We really seem poised to come together and coordinate. Ironical that the funding to support these efforts is about to go away.  
(Jane Heiser, OERI)

It should be emphasized that collaborations are work! They are not automatic money-savers, but take time to cultivate and nurture.  
(Virginia Heinrich, MN)

**Table R5, cont'd**

	Q3	Q4
<b>Computers &amp; Technology:</b>		
Provide computers, computer services, software, and access to online services and other technology. Help develop related library and information processing skills in general, especially as these skills relate to understanding and use of technology	6	6
Help bring technology into local literacy programs (computers, distance learning, video)	1	
Provide Internet access		4
Maintain Internet home pages that profile and provide information on library literacy programs, services, issues		1
<b>Information Services:</b>		
Serve more as community centers of information and one-stop drop-in centers	3	6
<b>Public Awareness &amp; Advocacy:</b>		
Take a stronger public relations, awareness, and advocacy role, sponsor community forums, sponsor discussions for patrons, hold readathons and workshops	2	7
<b>ESL Services:</b>		
Offer more ESL classes/services to immigrants, including voter registration and citizenship-testing services		3
<b>Other:</b>		
Provide leadership to local/county library literacy programs in the form of staff resources, fundraising, and curriculum/program development. Help service and planning groups cope with block grant programs	1	3
Be more supportive of local/county library literacy projects		3
Make literacy coordinator a regular library position		1
Train librarians to better work with/understand literacy providers		1
Be more sensitive to/supportive of needs of new adult readers		1
Provide testing services for potential adult literacy students to help those providing/planning instructional programs		1
Expand literacy services for the disabled		1
<b>Roles that are appropriate or inappropriate:</b>		
Job preparation and workplace literacy programs are inappropriate roles		3
In general, training, tutoring, and staff development should be left to literacy organizations, ABE programs, schools	1	6
Only low-level adult literacy instruction is appropriate for libraries		2
Librarians are not and should not be trained as educators	1	1
The leadership role belongs to others	1	1
Instructional services for the disabled and for people under age 18 should be a school responsibility		2
There are no inappropriate roles for libraries	1	

highly exemplary programs—some true national models, such as the New York Public Library program—in which libraries themselves provide the staff and instruction. The point is that the respondents did not, perhaps could not, look critically or freshly at this issue, although the question clearly invited it.

Significantly, however, there is prudent realization by both groups of the statewide need to avoid duplication of services. Above all else, **there is a strong call for better coordination on the part of public libraries, more collaboration, and more library involvement in overall statewide planning**—though little attention is given to what this would cost in money and service trade-offs.

A number of respondents consider libraries to be uniquely positioned in the community to help with various kinds of outreach. They feel that libraries should play a far larger role in promoting and recruiting tutors and hard-to-reach students.

The collections and development of materials

There are no stereotypical roles for either education or libraries. (Judith Rake, IL)

should also be expanded, according to the two groups. An interesting new idea offered here is for libraries to draw the reading and training collections of SLRCs and local literacy groups into their cataloging systems,

thereby expanding access to the materials.

Beyond the suggestions offered above, which are of first-order importance, respondents put forward a second tier of ideas: Some would like to see

libraries take a more direct instructional/training role. There is interest in more family literacy programming. Some would like to see libraries provide much more computer and other technology support to local groups, including information services on the Internet. They want libraries to strengthen their role as community information centers and to provide awareness and advocacy leadership.

<i>R6a. How well do you think LIBRARIANS in your state understand the potential role of libraries as education/literacy service providers? [Q1-Q4]</i>				
		Very Well	Not Well Enough	Don't Know
Q1	State librarians (35 of 35 answering)	43%	57%	0%
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (38 of 44)	42	58	0
Q3	SLRC Heads (38 of 40)	26	58	16
Q4	Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	36	56	8

  

<i>R6b. How well do you think STATE &amp; NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE &amp; FUNDING ENTITIES understand the potential role of libraries as education/literacy service providers? [Q1-Q4]</i>				
		Very Well	Not Well Enough	Don't Know
Q1	State librarians (35 of 35 answering)	17%	77%	7%
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (38 of 44)	8	84	8
Q3	SLRC Heads (38 of 40)	3	71	26
Q4	Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	5	89	6

  

<i>R6c. How well do you think LITERACY &amp; EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS IN YOUR STATE understand the potential role of libraries as education/literacy service providers? [Q1-Q4]</i>				
		Very Well	Not Well Enough	Don't Know
Q1	State librarians (35 of 35)	46%	51%	3%
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (38 of 44)	42	58	0
Q3	SLRC Heads (38 of 40)	39	45	16
Q4	Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	40	59	1

A few see a need for more ESL services, but this suggestion came from local library programs that specialize in such services. Considering the great national need in this area, and the fact that so many literacy programs countrywide provide substantial ESL services, it is surprising that the respondees were nearly silent on this subject.

**MANY WHO NEED TO UNDERSTAND DON'T**

The rest of Table R5 is a potpourri of ideas and perspectives, pointing again to some ambiguity about the library's role and mission.

The responses to questions R6a-R6c may partly explain why. It is astounding that so many respondees in every category answered "not well enough."

Overall, nearly three-fifths of them think that librarians do not understand the potential role of libraries as education/literacy service providers. This suggests that they do not understand the present role very well either. Note that librarians even think this about other librarians!

**R6d. Respondees who responded "not well enough" to one or more of the questions R6a-R6c were invited to suggest steps that might be taken to improve the understanding of librarians, state and national legislative and funding entities, and/or literacy/education professionals at the state level. [Q1-Q4]**

		<u>Responded</u>	<u>No Response</u>
Q1	State librarians (3 of 29)	10%	90%
Q2	Library agency literacy contacts (7 of 34)	21	79
Q3	SLRC Heads (7 of 36)	19	81
Q4	Local Program Heads (23 of 62)	37	63

State literacy and education professionals do not get very high marks either. But most troubling are the figures for state and national legislative and funding entities. On average, a full **80% of the respondees think that the very forces that affect them most through policy and funding decisions made at the state and national levels do not understand the role and potential of libraries in literacy.** The percentage of local program heads and library agency literacy personnel responding this way are a whopping 89% and 84%, respectively.

Add to all of this the very high percentage of "don't know" answers, especially on the part of SLRCs and with respect to legislators and funding groups, and there clearly is a communications and

- Q1** Statewide publicity and marketing to increase awareness of legislative and funding entities. (AR)

Continued emphasis on why low literacy skills reduces our overall economic competitiveness and lowers the standard of living for our children. (IN)

Nurture individual care and concern at the community level. (TN)
- Q2** Statewide publicity and marketing. (AR)

Marketing. Making presentations to librarians and training librarians in how to effectively provide services and draw libraries more into partnership arrangements with other literacy groups. (IL)

Clarify what literacy is and the library's role in education. Do this by developing a descriptive statement of purpose with the most thoughtful members of the library community. Keep this statement before the public for comment and discussion until all reach common ground. (MN)

Get librarians to serve on literacy councils and to commit to community literacy groups services the library can offer. Improve communication with state and national legislative/funding entities. (MS)

It all depends on local leadership and personal understanding. (TN)

Focus on state legislative bodies. National legislative bodies do not make as much of a connection. (VT)
- Q3** All three groups need to have a better sense of the educational role of libraries and, if nothing else, how to contribute effectively to the development of literacy through special collections. Also, education/literacy professionals need to know they're not the only service providers. (MN)

Sensitize and train librarians to work with non-readers. (MO)

A more concerted and systematic statewide effort to collaborate, between and among all groups. At the state legislative level, there is a tendency to gloss over adult literacy issues. (NE)

**Table R6d, cont'd**

Every year librarians and ABE teachers come together for a joint staff development workshop (i.e. 10 librarians, 10 teachers). People involved in this program understand, and those who have had state library literacy grants are knowledgeable. (TN)

Develop master plans to exploit each other's resources to the advantage of clients. Schedule discussions to maximize resources and eliminate duplication. (UT)

Hold at least 2 statewide meetings with good representation from the three groups to develop awareness and collaboration. Encourage more partnerships involving both adult education/literacy and library people. Encourage membership on key statewide planning committees. (VA)

Q4

Legislators and educators need more exposure to the educational role of libraries, as opposed to the view that supports the library's role as the provider of entertainment or recreational reading materials. (AR)

Library directors, boards, friends, and administrators have to believe it before we can convince anyone else. These people don't tend to come to workshops, but when we can get them to attend we *do* get through to them. (FL)

Generally, legislators, funders, and literacy professionals tend to see the current role, not the potential role. One has to have worked in the literacy field or have had a consciousness-raising experience to appreciate the impact libraries can have on the provision of basic education to the community. The best way I know to raise awareness is to meet and talk to functionally illiterate adults, especially those who have been in a library-sponsored literacy program. (FL)

Librarians need to be educated about the role they can play as tutors, promoters, materials developers, and the use of their buildings as literacy sites. We need to let legislative/funding entities know at every opportunity the important role libraries are playing in the literacy field through increased lobbying. I think literacy and education professionals are fully aware already, just choosing to ignore the current and potential role of libraries. (GA)

Many people think that library literacy programs are less professional than other library departments. They are thought to be mostly voluntary in nature and to have unprofessional administration and staffing. While that is not always so, it is in many cases. Administrators of library literacy programs should have a degree and experience in adult education, reading, or education, comparable to a librarian's degree. Other professionals would then take them more seriously. (IN)

More information should be provided to all legislators. State and national departments of education should provide more information and supports. Sharing through conferences and newsletters is good, but something more innovative would be even better. I don't have any innovative ideas at the moment. (IN)

All of these groups have some individuals who understand the issue very well, but they could do more to improve the understanding of their colleagues. (MA)

Special efforts are needed to change the attitudes of local librarians who look on literacy service as an inappropriate social service role. (MA)

Territorial issues of "professional" educators vs. community-based teachers must be eliminated. (MA)

Money is just not in the library budget. It could be, with a different attitude and role (literacy) acceptance at the state and federal levels and in the library associations such as ALA and equivalent state organizations. These groups should partnership with the national literacy organizations —LVA, Laubach, NIFL—and work out a plan or formula for staffing and costs at local libraries. (MI)

Many librarians immediately understand building leadership through school visits and summer reading programs, but this understanding does not always extend to adults or immigrants. Also, funders and the general public often regard libraries as book repositories rather than organic knowledge and community centers. (MN)

A high profile statewide campaign, such as Library Card Sign Up for Adult Literacy Students, needs to be launched in order to raise awareness of librarians and the other two groups. (NC)

Libraries in the state need to enhance their public relations efforts to promote library literacy services. There could be an alliance of representatives from state library literacy programs that would serve as a forum to set policy, design programs, develop comprehensive initiatives, and

Interesting that all categories polled did not feel that the potential role of libraries is well understood. We need to do more public relations both nationally and at the state level. In California, where libraries have been responsible for *all* the literacy promotions in the state, all providers have benefited. SLRCs can take on some of that responsibility but not in every state. Our statewide meeting with NIFL in 1995 did much to help other entities see the value and impact libraries can have. One comment heard repeatedly was that educators were surprised at the quality and professionalism of the library literacy staff! Our recent adult learner conference also opened the eyes of some educators about the work of libraries. (Carole Talan, CA)

**Table R6d, cont'd**

share resources and information. Legislatures need to be better informed about the range of library literacy services provided to their constituents and the impact of those services. Literacy and education professionals tend to view library literacy services as secondary to those offered by traditional educational institutions. That needs to change. (NY)

Library literacy programs need to be given greater visibility. Strong local programs are often not known about or felt statewide. Direct mailings that provide information about the programs would be helpful. (OK)

We need more of what we are already doing: library newsletter articles, workshops for librarians, provision of “starter collections.” Individual libraries should be encouraged to link up with local literacy providers by someone traveling the state to facilitate this. (OR)

Librarians could receive grant money with strict guidelines to insure that adult literacy will be the focus—e.g. a family literacy project would need to include an adult instructional component as well as a children’s component. Staff would need training on the needs of adults with low literacy skills. On another front, literacy professionals need to be reminded that libraries exist as learning resources. Their funding should require evidence that collaboration with libraries is being carried out. (PA)

Librarians are expected to do more and more with less and less, and they have to worry about funding for essential library services. Librarians would be more inclined to be involved if there were increased funding for library literacy. (PA)

These groups need to visit quality local programs, and talk with adults who have received help from library literacy programs about how it has changed their lives. (TX)

Librarians need to be more sensitive to the need to make their institutions more accessible and approachable to poorly skilled adults. (WI)

information problem of *tremendous* proportion. Except for about 20% of the state librarians, whose views may have been somewhat tempered by political pragmatism, the leanness of the “very well” response for legislators and funders literally jumps off the page.

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**BUILDING  
UNDERSTANDING**

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In R6d, the low response rate in virtually every category suggests that remarkably few of these professionals have thought very much about the poor understanding they think exists or how to overcome it. One project

advisor even wondered if, when it comes right down to it, some may just not care. This verges on the incredible, considering that the well-being perhaps even the survival of library literacy programs depends *heavily* on the depth of understanding the three groups have—to say nothing of their impact on the ability of state libraries to provide support and leadership.

But the answers of those who did respond show that some people in all categories have a fairly clear grasp of contextual reality, and some good ideas. The narrative part of Table R6d gives their responses—expressed pretty much in their own words so as to give a sense of texture and nuance. (Responses that simply restated the problem or an earlier opinion are not included.) Considering that the basic role of the local programs is to provide literacy services—not leadership to develop the statewide context—their thoughtfulness and far larger response rate is quite impressive.

In the main, the ideas given in R6d have long been recognized as vital to advancing adult literacy. Building awareness and

understanding through targeted and general public relations campaigns, for example. Or improving the content and flow of information to legislators, funders, educators, librarians, and other groups with a role and a stake. Or developing better lines of communications and more varied and effective collaboration. Or workshops, meetings, and publications for librarians...board members...legislators...the public...and any other groups who need to be sensitized, trained, or otherwise brought on board. Such things have been good all along. Even more would be better now, and the respondees see it.

One action urged by many of them is that more presentations to librarians take place. Such presentations would have many purposes, one being to arm librarians and library groups to more actively promote library literacy services at the state and national levels—lighting the flame for the torchbearers, so to speak.

Another cluster of ideas has to do with clarifying the role of libraries in adult literacy. “Do this,” says the literacy



representative of one state library agency, “by developing a descriptive statement of purpose with the most thoughtful members of the library community. Keep this statement before the public for comment and discussion until all reach common ground.”

In still another grouping of ideas, **respondees feel that traditional educators do not recognize or accept the role of libraries in literacy service.** They think this turf problem should be addressed as a priority.

Master planning of one kind or another is also suggested. Ideas range from the greater involvement of librarians in planning councils and committees at the state level to the formation of new state and national alliances that would explore new program approaches and funding formulas.

“Money is just not in the library budget,” says one local program head. “It could be, if there were a different attitude and role acceptance at the state and federal levels and in the library

**R7. What do you personally see as the economic and social value(s) of library literacy programs?** [Q1, Q2, Q4]

		<u>Responses</u>	<u>No Response</u>
Q1	State Librarians (29 of 35 responded)	83%	17%
Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts (36 of 44)	82	18
Q4	Local Program Heads (57 of 63)	90	10

*A sampling of views held in common by respondents in all three categories is given below. Emphasis is on survey responses that were expressed in terms of library literacy programs, not literacy programs in general.*

The mission of today’s public libraries is for lifelong learning. Adult literacy programs are critical to the economic growth and stability of America. The statistics alone are overwhelming that people who cannot read cannot contribute to the economic and social infrastructure. Literacy will not solve every problem but its affect will be felt by less dollars spent on corrections and welfare and more participation in educational and political programs. (Q1, AL)

An educated, motivated workforce will mean economic strength and viability to our state and community. The public library is the best positioned public agency to coordinate and lead these programs. (Q1, HI)

Library literacy programs can have significant economic and social value. In much the same way as other public library programs/services, library literacy programs influence and affect local communities. In a selfish way, library literacy programs offer public libraries the opportunity to “grow” their own users. (Q1, IA)

Library literacy programs provide a community-centered and individualized method of assisting adults to acquire essential reading skills. Libraries offer a perfect environment for the new reader or literacy student to begin using their newly acquired skills. This training brings the student into contact with government in a positive way, and facilitates the transition to becoming an independent learner and self-supporting member of the community. (Q1, MI)

The social value would be in the area of including another segment of the population in the planning of Library Programs. The segment being the “new reader.” In the area of economics the library would serve more patrons and circulation would increase. In budget justifications members can equal dollars. A more literate population also means more and/or better jobs that in turn equal more revenue for local businesses and a larger tax base. (Q1, SD)

Economics—resource materials readily available, flexible hours of operation. Social—library setting is generally nonthreatening to nonreaders enrolled in literacy classes. Some new readers become lifelong users and break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy. (Q2, AR)

Library literacy programs provide a sense of stability and safety in many communities whose residents are disproportionately represented in the lower literacy levels as documented by both the [national adult literacy] and Illinois surveys. Libraries also provide unlimited sources of information to meet any student’s needs. Library staff also are a resource to assist those adults and families lacking the skills to locate information for themselves. As tax-supported entities, public libraries provide most of these services at no charge to clients. Money for such services is often an issue with literacy patrons. (Q2, IL)

**Table R7, cont'd**

A literate citizenry is an informed citizenry; an informed citizenry is a participative citizenry. Libraries are the most available and approachable institution for *all* learners in lifelong pursuit of jobs, education, and participation in democracy. (Q2, LA)

Library literacy programs highlight a key role of the library as a source for lifelong learning. They reach out to a population which has a right to library services and programs which are traditionally under-represented in the community. (Q2, MA)

Library literacy programs can help advance the literacy level of the community, which, in the long term, advances the literacy level of the state. Higher literacy can lead to economic development, higher incomes, and greater self-pride. These factors can enhance the quality of life for new readers and the library community as a whole. (Q2, MO)

Libraries are a permanent institution in a student's community. Services are available at no cost before, during, and after a student's enrollment in a formal education program either through the library or elsewhere. A library can be used for intergenerational learning. It provides community, job, and entrepreneurship information. (Q2, NY)

To create lifelong learners, thinkers, and seekers of information for self-enlightenment. To create families that instill a lifetime of love of reading for pleasure and knowledge. To create communities that encourage learning and self-growth. (Q2, VT)

Unless we have a literate population, forget democracy. Libraries are one of the foundations of democracy. (Q2, WI)

Library literacy programs provide meaningful volunteer opportunities for individuals who want to serve their community by tutoring other adults. The programs enable adult learners to make significant life changes based on educational gains and increased self-esteem. These changes include finding a job, changing jobs to find a better one, discounting dependence on welfare, becoming a U.S. citizen, and becoming an active participant in the democratic process by voting. (Q4, Literacy Program, Napa City County Library, CA)

Socially, libraries are comfortable places to learn, and librarians are seldom judgmental. Economically, with a corps of volunteers, 200-300 adults per year can be taught during the course of the year...good value for having only two library personnel in our department. (Q4, Project LEAD, Miami-Dade Public Library System, FL)

Promotion of employability and economic self-sufficiency...citizen participation in government and community life...crime prevention...family literacy, effective parenting...enhanced quality of life (personal fulfillment, self-confidence, self-sufficiency)...improved health and

**Table R7, cont'd**

safety...lifelong learners who know how to utilize the wealth of resources and services of the library. (Q4, DeKalb County Public Library, GA)

Library literacy programs reach the most isolated adult nonreaders who have few, if any, other hopes except the literacy program. For ESL students and families, the programs provide cultural education as well as literacy skills. Literacy programs focus on life skills, parenting, job hunting, etc. and provide assistance to people with no other assistance available. (Q4, Literacy Program, Thomas Crane Public Library, MA)

Social values—libraries are easily accessible by the public and easily located. Age of patron or formal education is not a barrier. There is a degree of anonymity for patrons, making it less embarrassing for adults to seek help. Economic—libraries can house literacy programs at zero or low-cost overhead. Library staff can handle inquiries as part of their regular routine. (Q4, MARC Literacy Program, Greenville Public Library, MI)

Library literacy programs often serve adults who are at the most beginning levels in their reading and writing development, and who would otherwise not be eligible to participate in traditional reading and writing programs that serve populations reading above 4.0 [grade equivalency level]. The literacy program [here] serves people in communities identified as being most in need based upon current economic and educational profiles. In addition, libraries are often volunteer programs enabling community residents to give something positive back to their neighborhoods. (Q4, Centers for Reading and Writing, New York Public Library, NYC)

As adults improve their reading, writing, and math skills, they earn higher wages, which results in more taxes to support libraries. Also adults who are tutored in libraries or who are shown how to use library services become enthusiastic supporters. Another observed benefit is the modification of negative attitudes toward other people. (Q4, LEARN Project, Eugene Public Library, OR)

Since I live in a state with high illiteracy rates and we also have inadequate schools, high rates of traffic accidents (you don't have to be able to read to get a license here), signs in the grocery store that are virtually illegible, rising rates of AIDS, and a low standard of living, I think that illiteracy contributes greatly to a fearful, conservative, and often ignorant populace. Library literacy programs that promote literacy work to reduce all of that, *and* to give people the idea that information to help solve problems is available to *everybody!* (Q4, Literacy Program, Greenville County Library, SC)

Social values abound. It is an extension of the reading spectrum and the democratic principles which libraries hold dear. It gives the library a fuller and altruistic component to its mission. (Q4, Literacy Programs/Lifelong Learning, Seattle Public Library, WA)

associations. These groups should partnership with the national literacy organizations—LVA, Laubach, NIFL—and work out a plan or formula for staffing and costs at local libraries.”

“There could be an alliance of representatives from state library literacy programs that would serve as a forum to set policy, design programs, develop comprehensive initiatives, and share resources and information,” says another program head.

**GREAT ECONOMIC & SOCIAL VALUE**

Question R7 shifts the debate to a quite different track. The very high response rate here points to a broad awareness of adult functional illiteracy as a problem centrally important to the nation. The link between adult basic skills proficiency (which enables adults to function well in skill-dependent tasks) and the economic and social fabric of the country is recognized by the majority in every group.

However, most of the answers in R7 were given in terms of literacy programs generally, not

		<u>Responses</u>	<u>No Response</u>
Q1	State Librarians (31 of 35)	89%	11%
Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts (37 of 44)	84	16
		<u># Times Mentioned By</u>	
		<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>
Better community visibility and support, and a higher public sense of relevance		24	30
Cultivation of adult readers as new users/ greater library use		23	20
Increased patronage, customers, advocates		17	19
Higher circulation figures		16	15
More family literacy use and programming		3	3
Collaboration with community groups, which can grow into other program connections and partnerships		5	5
A sense of bettering the overall community, setting an example of success, better public relations for the library, building good will in the community		5	3
Recognition as the lifelong learning institution in the community/visibility as an education agency/ recognition as an integral member of the education community			4
The opportunity to show that libraries today are more than books, a new and wider identification as involved and active in the community			2
A way to demonstrate why the public should invest in libraries		1	
A stronger self-assessment of the library role		1	
Political visibility		1	
A more informed and engaged citizenry		1	1
Through support of workforce literacy, contributing to the local, state, and national economy		1	

library literacy programs in particular. (Note: Only a sampling of the most responsive returns are included in the table.) This squares with the call so many respondees made earlier for activities to

better define the role of public libraries. But more than that, it underscores a need to better and more widely articulate that role, in ways that make

it distinctive and definably different—and that also make it much more natural and immediate in the thinking of librarians and other library literacy personnel.

A case can be made for library literacy programs as the irreducible backbone of the literacy movement during the hard times when literacy and government support for it falls from the public spotlight. Why cede that role to the state education folks? Claim that turf.

(Forrest Chisman, Southport Institute for Policy Analysis)

Interestingly enough, the responses that *were* given in relation to library literacy programs are substantial and full of insight and conviction. Taken together they make a poignant and compelling case for library literacy programs—and again the responses from local program heads are remarkably sophisticated.

In the aggregate, they reflect a profound understanding of the public library as a respected, trusted, and permanent institution firmly anchored in the community, a bulwark of democracy and civilized society closely tied to the needs, circumstances, and interests of the public it serves.

They recognize the organic connection between a library's commitment and leadership in providing

adult literacy services, its ability to attract community interest and funds, and the economic vitality of the community in terms of jobs and an improved tax base.

They see the public library as a barrier-free, non-threatening haven where adults in need of upgraded skills can go for help (whether given by an outside tutoring group or directly by the library) and where they can count on being treated with respect.

Moreover, the respondees stress that **library literacy programs are uniquely able to reach the most isolated and poorly-skilled adults and to serve these people at a relatively low cost, or where the adult learner is concerned at no cost.**

And, not least, library literacy programs are seen as valuable public service opportunities for people who want to volunteer

and *give back* to their communities.

Any organized effort to mold a guiding definition for the role of public libraries in adult literacy—one that the field as a whole could rally behind and use to present a united front—would be off to a running start if it took to heart the ideas in R7.

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### **BENEFITS TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES THEMSELVES**

In question R8, the value issue was explored from a different angle. Library personnel (Q1 and Q2 groups) were asked about the specific benefits *libraries* get from providing library literacy programs—and some examples were given to help direct the thinking.

The question elicited an even larger response than R7, suggesting that whatever ambiguities may exist about the nature of their role in

literacy, **librarians and library agency literacy professionals recognize that their institutions gain in many ways from providing literacy services.**

Not surprisingly, the “starter” examples given in the question are seen as far and away the most important benefits, with greater community support, cultivation of new adult readers, increased patronage, and higher circulation figures mentioned in that rank order.

But other benefits came repeatedly to mind as well—an increase in the use of libraries by families, for instance, along with more interest in family literacy programming.

Opportunity in collaboration with community groups, some say, because that can grow into links and partnership projects with other groups—a kind of building-the-bridges benefit.

And personal and professional satisfaction—sometimes its own reward—which comes from a sense of having bettered the community. Moreover, good deeds feel good and they engender good will.

## 2: THE USE & LIMITS OF TECHNOLOGY

Research and long experience have shown that computers and distance learning technology, wisely implemented, can increase educational outreach, access, instructional effectiveness, independent learning, and economies in cost. Thus, groups Q1-Q4 were asked what they thought about the role and use of these tools in their adult literacy programs.

Moreover, explosive advances in the new communications technology are propelling library professionals, like everyone else, down the “information highway” with such speed that it would be remiss for this reason alone not to seek the respondents’ perceptions about technology.

They were reminded in a preface to the questions that Washington and many state legislatures are currently advocating greater use of technology throughout education.

It should be noted that close to 100% of all study participants chose to answer questions T1 and T2, which in itself shows a very strong interest in

*There is a strong push in Washington and in many state legislatures for greater use of technology (i.e. computers, television, and other media) throughout education.*

**T1. Do you think it is important for library literacy programs in your state (adult literacy programs generally in the case of SLRCs) to adopt or make heavier use of COMPUTERS? [Q1-Q4]**

		Yes	No	Not Sure
Q1	State Librarians (35 of 35 answered)	85%	3%	11%
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (38 of 44)	79	8	13
Q3	SLRC Heads (40 of 40)	98	2	0
Q4	Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	73	18	9

**T2. Would (your state’s public libraries for Q1-Q2, adult literacy programs generally for Q3, or “you” for Q4) benefit from adopting or making heavier use of DISTANCE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY (television and related video technology) for adult literacy purposes? ([Q1-Q4])**

		Yes	No	Not Sure
Q1	State Librarians (35 of 35)	63%	17%	20%
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (35 of 44)	60	14	26
Q3	SLRC Heads (39 of 40)	90	8	2
Q4	Local Program Heads (63 of 63)	44	21	35

technology. Indeed, few other questions in the survey drew such a heavy response across the board.

The figures in the above table reveal an extraordinary degree of support for greater use of both computers and distance learning technology.

### **TECHNOLOGY EMBRACED... BUT WITH CAUTION**

It is surprising that the library agency personnel,

especially the librarians themselves, so heavily favor *both*—more than four-fifths favor more computer use and some two-thirds say they would like to see more distance learning use.

Equally striking, though for somewhat different reasons, are the responses of groups Q3 and Q4.

State literacy resource center heads, with their positive responses of 98%

and 90% respectively, appear to understand the need for computer technology best and to most appreciate the possibilities of distance learning.

And, local programs—those who actually *provide* library literacy services—have the heaviest *negative* response.

While local groups are three times more likely to favor more use of computers than not to, they are not as wildly

enthusiastic as the other groups, and only 44% of them think that distance learning technology has potential.

What does their lower enthusiasm mean, especially where distance learning is concerned? The responses themselves give some strong clues.

Data gathered in question T3 and throughout this study suggest that, in general, local library literacy programs are struggling financially to preserve their core instructional services, even in some cases just to survive. Thus, they may appreciate better than anyone else that *any* new technology (and the training and staff that such would require) is a luxury they cannot afford right now.

In addition, some of the programs—especially those emphasizing one-on-one or small-group tutoring or that celebrate the importance of caring, personal contact—may not be all that convinced that more computers, let alone television and other technology, can help them do their jobs better.

Moreover, the heavy “not sure” response in T2 is very telling. More than

**T3. If you think more use of computers or of distance learning technologies is important (to library literacy programs in Q1-Q2, to adult literacy programs generally in Q3, to “you” in Q4), what plans do you have for achieving this? [Q1-Q4]**

		<u>Responses</u>	<u>No Response</u>
Q1	State Librarians (23 responses of 30 possible)	77%	23%
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (25 of 35)	71	29
Q3	SLRC Heads (38 of 41)	93	7
Q4	Local Programs (47 of 51)	92	8

[Note: A few non-respondees considered the question “not applicable.”]

**Q1 & Q2 - Public Library Plans Indicated**

	Q1	Q2
Establish/strengthen computer-assisted instruction centers and labs. (DC, HI)	2	
Use electronic network resources to provide literacy resources. (DE)	1	
Our libraries are already equipped but need training, which is and can best be provided by our SLRC. (IL)	1	
Over 100 public libraries in this state are downlink sites for distance education and we are incorporating technology with a literacy mission. (WV)	1	
Our state library is encouraging librarians around the state to install distance learning meeting rooms. (IA)	1	
Continued dissemination of GED on TV in public libraries throughout the state. (MN)	1	
Iowa libraries have spent millions to buy computers. The State Library has spent \$2.5 million to bring online information to libraries. Some 90 public libraries are on the statewide distance education network. (IA)	1	
The Internet and WWW are the most promising technologies now (video is too expensive) and we are watching the developments. (OR)	1	
Take part in state master planning for technology. (TX)	1	
Work with libraries and other groups to support development of computer literacy. (RI)	1	
If more funding comes from bond issues presently in the state legislature, we hope to get more technology into libraries. (ME)	1	
Encourage local and regional librarians to include computers in their grant applications. (WI)	1	
Encourage library use of information resources on the Internet. (IA)	1	
The state library provides/allows literacy program funding for purchase/use of technology. (KS, CA)	1	1
Statewide Internet access via public libraries is being developed now in a demonstration project with literacy students. (ND)	1	1
The SLRC and other key literacy and ABE groups in the state will keep using the Rural Distance Communications Network to provide training and hold board meetings. (SD)	1	1
Keep working with our SLRC to educate library personnel about available software. (OH)	1	1

<i>Table T3, cont'd</i>	Q1	Q2
State librarian is on statewide board for distance learning. (FL)	1	1
Planning in process now for statewide library telecommunications network that will be able to link to academic and government groups. (MS)	1	1
If more federal funding is available (LSCA or other) make technology for libraries a priority—then offer teleconferencing services to literacy programs. (AR)	1	1
Work with technical college system to explore new technologies, including distance learning. (WI, WA)	1	1
Distance-learning-technology is particularly appropriate for rurally isolated areas of the state. We are providing funding for public libraries to connect to the Internet, encouraging systems to collaborate with community agencies and organizations to share catalogs and resources online, and providing funds for community information referral programs in the libraries. (TX)		1
Use of distance learning models that can provide training, as in Pennsylvania. Work to provide more libraries with Internet access (many of our local library literacy programs are already profiled on a special Internet site). (MA)		1
The State Library will produce more interactive video conferences on literacy, train more educators and librarians how to work with computer and distance learning formats, increase our video holdings in literacy with local programs given permission to duplicate them, and encourage more libraries to purchase technology or distance learning downlinks. (IL)		1
The Department of Libraries is placing at least one computer in each public library in our state. The Literacy Office has established an electronic bulletin board for literacy. The BB lists local, state, and national training, grant and employment opportunities, legislative alerts, and literacy “swap” lists. (OK)		1
A LSCA Title VI grant set up six adult learning work stations in public libraries for the purpose of demonstrating their effectiveness. Sharing the results of this demonstration should assist in increasing the use of the technology. The Oregon Information Highway Project is attempting to increase Internet connectivity in public libraries. If adult learning programs can be effectively transmitted, adult new readers could certainly use them once the libraries are connected to the Internet. Libraries also need to refer students more to programs broadcast over the state’s distance learning system as administered through ABE programs in community colleges. (OR)		1
Participation in community networks via satellite and connection to the Internet. (IN)		1
We just started working with our library school to initiate courses in local libraries for literacy students. (CT)		1
Encourage each library to plan for education to be available via alternate routes. (TN)		1
Look continuously for grant/funding opportunities for hardware and software and disseminate the information. (LA)		1
Hold up technology as a tool, work to ensure equitable access, and encourage library services to make technology available to their publics. (MN)		1
Other (e.g. none, someone else’s concern, no funds just encouragement, we’re looking for resources).	3	5

one-third (35%) of the local groups say that they don’t know enough about the matter to make a judgment. On this point, the high “not sure” response of the library personnel with respect to distance learning is also significant. Once again, inadequate communications and limited understanding appear to be problems.

Table T3 responses also raise questions about the *nature* of the generally high interest in technology. Things may not mean exactly what they seem to.

For instance, many of the T3 respondents, especially in groups Q1 and Q2, use a highly computer-oriented definition of “distance learning,” rather than the one set up in question T2.

In education circles, *television, related video technology, and other media* usually refers to the use of broadcast and recording media for instruction and tutor/teacher training—to extend outreach...or provide independent learning opportunities...or, where video is concerned, to enable greater

customization and portability of education. Yet in the minds of most of the respondents, distance learning is less equated with educational technology in the old sense than with electronic (computer!) networking for information sharing and with the newest communications paths to information—the Internet and World Wide Web.

This definition problem blurs somewhat the clarity of the T1-T2 response. What seems at first to be an astounding breakthrough in the understanding and acceptance of the broadcast media for educational purposes is not necessarily the case at all despite the vast unrealized potential of these media.

Moreover, it should be noted that the Internet and World Wide Web venues, captivating as they are, are probably more useful to program staff and tutors than to low-skilled adult students. It is hard to imagine that people with very poor reading and writing skills would be able to make much use of this technology even if they had physical access to it and even if they could

*Table T3, cont'd*

**Q3 - SLRC Plans** (adult literacy programs generally)

AL	Implementation of performance, measurement, reporting, and improvement systems.
AK	We're doing it.
AZ	NIFL grant to Western Region for electronic networking among SLRCs and national entities.
CA	Working closely with the Distance Learning Project of the State Department of Education.
CO	Working on a networking/communication system.
CT	Developing more training for literacy providers in the use of new technology. Developing a software/media library for previewing and circulation. Home Page on the Internet.
HI	The Hawaii SLRC belongs to a regional hub.
IA	Our Center will have a server site on the Internet in the Winter/Spring of 1996. We will position computers/modems at each community college, ABE site, and public library.
IL	We have trained 19 providers statewide in a train-the-trainer program using the America Online and Internet five-day training program of the National Center for Adult Literacy. We are also encouraging programs to use state and federal grant dollars for modems and communication packages as well as instructional software for students. We contracted with the Illinois Center of Excellence for Technology Development at Waubensee Community College to do regional workshops on technology planning, integrating technology in instruction, and hypermedia. We have been participants in video conferences produced by the Illinois State Library and Western Illinois University.
IN	Network through computers. Have system operators responsible for monitoring, cultivating dialogue on certain topics. Research Center to coordinate.
KS	The public television station in Kansas City has provided the opportunity to electronically link all adult education facilities. Funds are available to add all library literacy programs to that network, but they are not approved for that use.
KY	Literacy providers and therefore students do not have ready access to technology hardware and courseware. Steps have been taken to ensure that each literacy provider has computerized record-keeping capability. Funds are not available to the adult education network to keep adult students technologically literate.
LA	We were the first state to link the JSEP program to incarcerated youth and adults. Recidivism has dropped dramatically. LSU has initiated six family literacy sites—in remote areas—via full-motion interactive video over telephone lines.
MD	This year's program includes merging with the local area network to publicize the Center's materials and activities.
MI	We conduct professional development programs via two-way interactive television. We also conduct business meetings, provide training on two-way, and have established a computer bulletin board.
MN	We're looking at developing on a state level an information network using the World Wide Web, linking information about the state-level organizations. We are planning to cultivate a network of groups around the state that can coordinate distance learning opportunities in their areas. We also want to use the Internet as a delivery mechanism.
MO	We are purchasing videos and software to loan. We're planning to develop professional development classes and workshops for distance learning. We are going to have a WWW Home Page.
MS	We are developing a plan to provide training to practitioners and other interagency personnel, also to link resources.



**Table T3, cont'd**

MT	None currently, but a long-range, strategic process is "in the works."
NC	Contract for NCAL/PBS teleconferences. Include distance learning in our family literacy plans. Participate in an Internet access project as part of a NIFL technology grant for regional hubs. Software evaluation and "vendor fair" activities are in the planning stages in cooperation with the NCLA Literacy committee.
ND	No concrete plans at this time.
NE	The SLRC is preparing to conduct a statewide survey of adult literacy providers (ABE/GED, ESL, volunteer literacy groups, community-based, library, etc.) to assess existing computer use and/or access and begin to identify what is needed across the state to encourage greater use of technology. We hope to establish a statewide listserv available to all groups, learners, businesses, agencies. We are also beginning some ABE/GED staff development efforts using distance education technologies. There will be additional training provided across the state beginning in the summer of 1996, to help familiarize people with the use of computers in an instructional/learning capacity.
NJ	Raising awareness of the positive impact that appropriately used instructional technology has. Demonstration workshops and library lending of SLRC-owned software and videotapes. Model practices workshops using local program staff currently involved with the use of technology.
NM	We have initiated a number of privately funded projects to place computers and software with local literacy programs. We will continue to do this.
NY	None at this time because the SLRC will cease to exist after 12/31/95.
OH	Our SLRC maintains a gopher and WWW server for adult education resources. We provide training on the Internet for teachers, and maintain a listserv for Ohio adult literacy educators. We are the Regional Technology Hub for the eleven other Midwest SLRCs (NIFL grant). We will be helping them develop WWW pages, add state-specific information to the server, and work with local programs to use the resources on the Internet.
OK	More funding for equipment and training.
PA	Provide resources/training in the administrative/instructional use of technology. Initially a plan was developed to create a Center for the use of distance learning technologies. However, with the rescission of funding, full implementation of the "Tech Center" will be placed on hold.
SC	We provide much CAI training. We also go out with a coach to local business and industry sites. A JTPA grant pays for the driver.
SD	The technology is in place and in use for online access to and borrowing of materials. The sharing of resources is a must in this time of shrinking state and federal budgets.
TN	Limited staff development has been offered via satellite downlink. At present, there are no plans (or funds) to develop distance learning opportunities for literacy programs.
UT	We have secured the latest technology and media (CD-ROMs, Internet connections, etc.) and we demonstrate and train adult literacy providers throughout the state in the application of these technologies. We have launched distance learning instructional programs via public television.
VT	LINC's grant—NIFL funding. Support from the Department of Education. Promotion of professional development opportunities, including state conferences.
VA	Our state is invested heavily in automating the SLRC and for the SLRC to establish an electronic information/communications system with local and state programs and national groups. Technology implementation and training in use of said technology is a major goal for our SLRC.
WA	Continue to provide training in the use of technology. Continue to publish technology users' guides annually. Explore use of the Internet as a practitioner-inquiry group medium.

afford the online service charges.

Along these same lines, library personnel and SLRC heads almost universally favor the greater use of computers, and they overwhelmingly favor more distance learning technology. But fewer than half of the state library people in T3 make any reference at all to library *literacy* programs. They think more generally in terms of advancing their information service role. That goal is certainly vital to their mission and their publics as an immediate and first priority. But that was not the question posed.

A different kind of issue surfaces in the SLRC response to question T3. This group doesn't refer very often to library literacy programs either. But they can't be faulted for this when they were asked about adult literacy programs in general. What is striking is that their thinking here jibes with their responses to questions asked elsewhere in the survey about the role and place of public libraries in statewide service delivery. Only a handful of the strongest SLRCs, then and now,

include libraries in their thinking or, for that matter, approach delivery system issues in a truly systemic way.

It is not that the qualifier caveats just touched on diminish the very high level of interest these groups have in technology, but they do caution against an overly optimistic interpretation of the findings. In any case, the basic purpose of question T3 was to determine whether those favoring more use of technology have plans for achieving it, and if so what they might be planning to do.

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**TECHNOLOGY  
PLANNING:  
READY & WILLING,  
BUT ABLE?**

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In terms of quantity alone, the responses indicate that a lot is already going on across the country at both state and local levels. It can't be boiled down to a few clear patterns because of the immense variety from place to place. For that reason, the entire table is presented here. Neither is it possible, on the basis of the data gathered, to judge the quality or depth of the activities or to judge if an

**Table T3, cont'd**

- WV We currently have a 5-year plan underway. If funding exists it will be continued. We are sequentially and geographically providing training and equipment to literacy providers across the state.
- WI The SLRC is actively involved in bringing together technology suppliers and instructors to promote planning and professional development.
- WY No funds, only encouragement.

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**Q4 - Local Program Plans (self-help)**

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- AR Computers are today—and so are our students! Any computer-related services offered to volunteers (training, in-service, instruction) would be realistic in today's technology. It represents reading for living/life skills, payoff of economic and social promotions for individuals. But space is limited. (*Literacy Council of Hot Spring County*)
- AR We are looking at ways to make the computer more available to ESL students. (*Reading Together, Arkansas River Valley Libraries for Literacy*)
- CA Finding funds to support the purchase of computers. (*Napa County Library Literacy Program*)
- CA We have been part of a computer-aided literacy project for the past 3 years (Santa Clara County Library is the fiscal agent). We plan to continue participating as long as it is funded. (*Partners in Reading, San Jose Public Library*)
- CA We use computers with our students. We would like for 90% of students to be tied into a computer group in addition to their tutoring. We are scheduling more classes. (*Commerce Public Library Adult Literacy Program*)
- CA Currently working with local community college to use download training/in-service sessions for tutors. Also working with local network expert to network all office computers and computer in off-site office for better use of management software. (*LVA-Marin County, San Rafael Public Library*)
- CO None at present. Our library is very limited in space available. We need sites for computers if we decide to expand. (*Literacy Program, Mesa County Public Library District*)
- CT We have three computers loaded with educational software for learners and a TV/VCR. (*LVA-Greater Waterbury, Silas Bronson Library*)
- DE Purchase new, updated equipment and software. (*LVA-Wilmington Library*)
- FL None—support for program is dwindling. We're focused now on simply maintaining what we have. (*Hillsborough Literacy Council, Tampa-Hillsborough County Library System*)
- FL We have educational computer programs in our literacy learning center from pre-K up on reading, math, geography, etc. Videos to teach reading at home or train tutors. (*Panhandle Library Literacy Consortium, Jefferson County Public Library*)
- FL It is going to be a focus of fundraising in the next two years. (*Each One-Teach One, Broward County Public Library*)
- FL Our most recent purchases have included CD-ROMs and sound. We use videotapes and would like to be able to purchase more videos. We have made no plans for distance learning but would like to collaborate with other local providers to begin to explore ways to offer our students this option. (*Center for Adult Learning, Jacksonville Public Libraries*)
- GA We are in the process of trying to add more computers to our Learning Center as well as initiate them in our outreach facilities/locations. We have extended the satellite dish capabilities to our Learning Center to facilitate distance learning. Extended network to Learning Center to facilitate computer-based education. (*Learning Center, Athens-Clarke County Public Library*)

**Table T3, cont'd**

- GA We use both and currently have a 24-hour, 7-day a week television cable channel devoted to literacy. (*Literacy Program, Sara Hightower Regional Library*)
- GA To seek grant funds for additional computer learning labs and a mobile computer learning lab. When the library becomes connected to the Internet, we'd like to provide special opportunities for adult learners to participate in listservs such as LEARNER. To develop a coalition of county agencies to address literacy needs of their employees which could be met by using a mobile computer lab and/or the library distance learning site. (*Literacy Program of DeKalb County Public Library*)
- IL Currently involved in statewide pilot project for technology. Wrote a technology plan for library literacy. (*Libraries for Literacy in Lake County*)
- IN We have already requested certain hardware and software as "wish lists," and include hardware purchases among those items we could use from local benefactors. Our use of technology would primarily aid us in work throughout, and not so much in our educational objectives. (*Literacy Program, Knox County Public Library*)
- KS We are seeking computers, software and cash donations from our business community. (*Literacy Program, Johnson County Library*)
- MA We are using a computer grant this year to fully develop the use of our 9 computers with learners. We'll be using a modem and gaining access to Internet. (*Read Write/Now, Springfield City Library-Mason Sq. Branch*)
- MA Getting a dedicated phone line/modem. Funds to buy more software. (*Center for New Americans, Jones Library*)
- MA With each proposal we develop, we include resources for new technology. Currently there are no other means available to acquire technology for Lawrence. Four out of the last five years, due to inadequate local funding, we have had to raise money to buy books! (*Newcomer Family Literacy Project, The Lawrence Public Library*)
- MA We plan to train tutors more effectively and efficiently in using computers that are available for use in the library. (*Literacy Program, Thomas Crane Public Library*)
- MI We struggle to exist now. People in our community don't expect their taxes to be used for supporting administration of literacy programs. They want their donations to go for direct benefit of the student being served—educational materials and volunteer tutor training. Of course, this doesn't happen without administrative costs. (*MARC Literacy Program, Greenville Public Library*)
- MN We are developing a program so that the library will have two additional CD-ROM work stations and the Hubbs Center at two computers with direct access to the library catalog (which includes a magazine index and catalogs for other metropolitan public libraries). Within the next two years all the libraries in the city will offer Internet access. At present it is a pilot at the Hamline Branch. (*Linking Libraries & Literacy for Lifelong Learning, Lexington Branch Library, St. Paul*)
- MN We have received a grant for adopting computing for differently abled. We will establish an open computing lab in 1997. (*Franklin Learning Center, Franklin Community of Library, Minneapolis Public Library*)
- NC Applying for grants for software, hardware, distance learning. (*Community of Readers, Glenwood Library, Greensboro*)
- NJ Since the literacy program personnel is minimal, and the influx of learners is high, we do not have time to keep the records on computer anymore. (*Basic Skills for Reading and ESL, Elizabeth Public Library*)
- NJ It's not carried out in a vacuum. We are in the process of purchasing more software both kids and adults can use. TV and radio are used by our learners to learn more about their communities via discussion-led group activities. (*Literacy for Non-English Speakers, Paterson Free Public Library*)
- NM Working with local university and ABE classes. (*LVA-Socorro County, Socorro Public Library*)
- NY Seeking out funding for two full-time technology persons and more hardware and software. (*Literacy Program, Brooklyn Public Library*)

activity in one state has as much weight as that same activity in another state.

Yet, it is significant to find in Table T3 that, with a few exceptions, the plans described by librarians and library agency literacy professionals tend to be somewhat static. They have the feel of being very tentative...conditioned on the continued availability of already inadequate funding...modest in scope and vision...and exploratory in nature.

The talk is largely in terms of *encouraging* others to do something... *exploring* ideas with other groups...*looking for* resources and funding... *getting ready to plan*... *watching* the developments...or continuing to do what is already being done, e.g. *allowing* the use of funds for technology purchases by local library literacy programs.

Still, several of the Q1 and Q2 responses are quite proactive and substantial.

For example, the state librarian of Iowa says that "the State Library has spent \$2.5 million to bring online information to libraries. Some 90 public libraries are on the

statewide distance education network.”

In Oregon, “a LSCA Title VI grant set up six adult learning work stations in public libraries for the purpose of demonstrating their effectiveness. Sharing the results of this demonstration should assist in increasing the use of the technology. The Oregon Information Highway Project is attempting to increase Internet connectivity in public libraries....Libraries also need to refer students more to programs broadcast over the state’s distance learning system as administered through ABE programs in community colleges.”

In Illinois, “the State Library will produce more interactive video conferences on literacy, train more educators and librarians how to work with computer and distance learning formats, and increase [its] video holdings in literacy (with local programs given permission to duplicate them).”

The Library Commission spokeswoman in Massachusetts advocates “use of distance learning models that can

**Table T3, cont’d**

NY In the Fall of 1994, the Centers brought in the former director of the Technology Center at NCAL, to evaluate the current status of technology in the program and to prepare a plan that would include long and short term goals. The following activities have been initiated as a result of the report: the purchase of one multi-media computer for each Center, the development of a task group to review and recommend multimedia software, the Bloomingdale and Fordham Centers have gone online as a result of a grant from the NYC Professional Development Consortium, and extending computer hours at Centers to increase student access. In addition we plan to work toward achieving the following goals: provide more comprehensive and continuous training for professionals and volunteers, implement a planned computer literacy curriculum for students, continue to upgrade computers at CRW sites, continue to develop Central Software Database, and begin to develop online assessment techniques. (*Centers for Reading & Writing, New York Public Library*)

OK I have the technology and software now; am in the process of developing such a program. (Star-Hartley Invest Learning) (*Great Plains Literacy Council, Southern Prairie Library System*)

OK We just completed a public fundraiser to raise funds to purchase software for the public computers in the library. (*Moore Literacy Council, Cleveland County Library*)

OK None at this point; we have neither the funding nor the physical space to implement the use of computers in the literacy program. (*Literacy Council of LeFlore County, Buckley Public Library*)

OR We need to build our new library first, but are researching software and investigating computer space possibilities in this one. (*LEARN Project, Eugene Public Library*)

PA (1) We have received a LSCA Title VI Library Literacy Programs grant for 1995-96. With LSCA funds, we will research adult literacy resources on the Internet, provide Internet training for 24 adult learners and their instructors, and publish the 5th edition of the RDP Bibliography on the Internet. Access will continue beyond the project through the RDP Internet Center. (2) At least four times a year, our staff members provide workshops for tutors and teachers. New and significant books are highlighted, but an increasing emphasis is being placed on computer software suitable for adult learners. These workshops will be expanded to a second location where the computers acquired through the Internet project will be used. (*Reader Development Program, Free Library of Philadelphia*)

PA We would like to train tutors to use computers in our tutor training workshop. We also would like to compile a list of available computer resources (hardware and software) available at local libraries. If we had additional funding, we could purchase software. (*Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program, Bradford County Library*)

RI For management applications, a new computer and updated software will produce more professional PR materials, i.e. brochures, flyers, newsletters, reports, letters. An approved grant will provide for acquisition of such technology. (*LVA-Kent County, Coventry Public Library*)

SC The Library will acquire instructional audio-video materials and equipment, three computers, literacy software, one set of read-along classics, and necessary books to complete a core print literacy collection. Curriculum is shifting to more use of computers, videos, and non-print materials. Video and audio tapes and equipment are not inexpensive, and are cumbersome to transport. (*Literacy Program, Greenville County Library*)

TX During March of 1996, we will be opening a new Literacy Center to include a 20-station computer learning lab. (*Literacy Center, El Paso Public Library*)

TX None at this time. (*Andrews Adult Literacy Program of Andrews Public Library*)

UT Yes on DLT for staff training purposes. We have applied for a grant that would enable us to purchase educational hardware and software, and training personnel. We currently offer introductory computer instruction in a classroom setting. (*Bridgerland Literacy, Logan Library*)

VA Provide for student use computer software or basic literacy and pre-GED. (*Literacy Program, Newport News Public Library*)

WA We plan to provide access to ABE/ESL/GED software on a walk-in and class

**Table T3, cont'd**

basis. We will be more attractive because of our increased technology. New learners will come to us to “learn the computer” and will read more as side benefit. (*Literacy Program/ Lifelong Learning, Seattle Public Library*)

WI We are piloting a computer Family Literacy Program, *Families Learn and Earn*, designed to help families gain computer knowledge, upgrade job skills, and interact with their children. Designed for a business site. (*LVA Chippewa Valley/Eau Claire, Eau Claire Public Library*)

WV We would have to pursue this through grants because we don't have the funding. (*Literacy Program, Monroe County and Peterstown Public Libraries*)

provide training...” The agency will “work to provide more libraries with Internet access.” It is worthy of note that on May 29, 1996, 39 local library literacy programs in the state were listed on a Commission Internet site that also provides links to state and national resources, so that anyone with access can track down information on library literacy programs, services, and issues. (For those who want to browse, the site address is <http://mlin.lib.ma.us>.)

According to the Texas library agency, “distance learning technology is particularly appropriate for *rurally isolated* areas of the state. [The agency] is providing funding for public libraries to connect to the Internet, encouraging systems to collaborate with community

agencies and organizations [in order] to share catalogs and resources online, and providing funds for community information referral programs in the libraries.”

And in West Virginia, “over 100 public libraries in this state are downlink sites for distance education and [the agency is] incorporating technology with a literacy mission.”

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### THE SLRC PERSPECTIVE

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In general, the SLRC directors are more detailed in their thinking than the state library personnel, although now and then a curious note of complacency sets in.

Their plans fall heavily into a few broad areas: workshops...

training programs and services...and activities to expand and improve information services—with occasional options for independent learning—especially via the Internet.

Plans are in the works in some cases for software evaluation and in one SLRC for the development of a media software library to which there would be statewide access.

Moreover, regional and statewide electronic networking initiatives, already in process in many of the states, would be built on in several instances. (Note that some of the thinking on this subject stems from regional demonstration grants from the National Institute for Literacy, a program that apparently recognizes the need for

educators and technologists to work and think together in new ways. Libraries do not seem to be a key partner in that demonstration activity but they could be easily included.)

It is interesting that while a few SLRCs in T3 speak of planning for the greater use of computers for *instructional* purposes, the main focus, again, is on serving informational and staff training needs. It is also interesting that some of the thinking reflects a kind of pipe-dreaming that is probably unrealistic in the extreme in the present economic and political climate.

But, in a more positive vein, here are a few thought-provoking SLRC replies:

“Our Center will have a server site on the Internet in the Winter/Spring of 1996,” says the Iowa SLRC. “We will position computers/modems at each community college, ABE site, and public library.”

In Kentucky, “literacy providers and therefore students do not have ready access to technology hardware and courseware.

Steps have been taken to ensure that each literacy provider has computerized record-keeping capability. Funds are not available to the adult education network to keep adult students technologically literate.”

“The SLRC [in Nebraska] is preparing to conduct a statewide survey of adult literacy providers...to assess existing computer use and/or access and begin to identify what is needed across the state to encourage greater use of technology. [They] hope to establish a statewide listserv available to all groups, learners, businesses, agencies. [They] are also beginning some ABE-GED staff development efforts using distance education technologies. Additional training will be provided across the state...to help familiarize people with the use of computers in an instructional/learning capacity.”

The Ohio SLRC “maintains a gopher and WWW server for adult education resources. [It] provides training on the Internet for teachers, and maintains a listserv for Ohio adult literacy educators. [It is] the

Regional Technology Hub for the eleven other Midwest SLRCs (NIFL grant) and will be helping them develop WWW pages, add state-specific information to the server, and work with local programs to use the resources on the Internet.”

Utah is demonstrating and training adult literacy providers in the use and application of the latest technology and media ...which it has already secured. Beyond that, instructional programs are already being offered on public television and they will presumably be continued.

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### **LOCAL PROGRAMS: TRYING TO DO THE NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE**

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Local library literacy program directors are the final group to be heard from on question T3.

Consistent with their low response rate earlier, there are few references here to distance learning technology or the Internet, though a few of the respondees do speak of entering these arenas.

What is evident from the responses is that most programs already use computers to some degree

For greater use of computers and distance learning technology to become a reality in this time of shrinking budgets and staff reductions there will need to be a greater degree of cooperation and collaboration. Educators, librarians, and literacy personnel need to all feel that they are important players! Establishment of linkages between literacy, library, and education on the World Wide Web can help bring these groups together. (Dan Boyd, SD)

for either instructional or program management purposes—and this is the case whether they offer direct instructional services or function as umbrella organizations in support of such groups.

Most programs would apparently benefit from more computer usage. Some are trying to plan for that now. Others have recently concluded such planning and are taking steps to wider implementation. Still others are engaged in fundraising to this end. Some appear to be at a loss altogether about what to do and how.

For many—and this is certainly one of the most important messages of this study—**even those local library literacy programs that have concrete plans**

**for more and better computer use and a solid base on which to build are constrained by formidable funding and space problems.** Despite their relatively good understanding and intentions, few local programs appear to have the means to finance much of anything new.

Indeed in one New Jersey program, because there are too few staff members and a heavy influx of students there is not even time to keep the records on a computer that is already dedicated to that purpose.

And for a program in Minnesota it is a “struggle to exist now. People in the community don’t expect their taxes to be used for supporting administration of literacy

programs. They want their donations to go for direct benefit of the student being served, or for educational materials and volunteer tutor training. Of course, this doesn't happen without administrative costs."

Programs that may be in somewhat better financial shape are not necessarily able to take giant steps either, though there are a few bright lights.

For instance, the Athens-Clarke County Public Library program in Georgia is "in the process of trying to add more computers to [its] Learning Center as well as initiate them in [its] outreach facilities/locations. [They also] have extended satellite dish capabilities to [their] Learning Center to facilitate distance learning."

In California, the San Rafael Public Library's LVA program is "working with the local community college to use download training/in-service sessions for tutors."

And Read Write/Now of Springfield City Library in Massachusetts is "using a computer grant this year

to fully develop the use of [its] 9 computers with learners. [They'll] be using a modem and gaining access to the Internet."

In only a few cases do really substantial efforts appear to be unfolding. The Literacy Center of the El Paso Public Library in Texas is one case. It "will be opening a new Literacy Center to include a 20-station computer learning lab."

Two of the most notable exceptions are literacy programs of the New York Public Library and the Free Library of Philadelphia. As their lengthy responses in Table T3 indicate, these programs have already done extensive technology planning and both are involved in ambitious implementation activities.

But they are hardly typical. One is a large direct-service urban effort and the other is a long-established city-wide resource and technical support center for surrounding provider groups. And, as will be evident later on, compared to other local programs in the study, these two are among the best funded—though they are under the

same budget pressures as everyone else and do not necessarily have a secure future.

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### **TIME & TIME AGAIN: NO MONEY!**

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If any doubt lingers about funding as a major obstacle to planning for and implementing computer and distance learning technology, for library literacy programs or any other purpose, the responses to the next question should dispel it.

Despite the fact that the question intentionally avoided explicit reference to funding as a possible barrier, it is crystal clear from T4 alone that **the single greatest obstacle to wider use of these technologies among all groups surveyed is the lack of funding.**

As analysis of Table T4 reveals, even barriers described in other terms translate into funding problems. People cannot afford to hire needed staff, seek or give training in the new technologies, buy the hardware and software in the first place, maintain it once acquired, or tie into a network of interest.

Moreover, lack of space for housing the

technology and its essential supporting operations and staff is a considerable problem.

The data also suggest that a significant number of the SLRC respondents feel that there is limited understanding of and eagerness to use computers and distance learning technology, especially among provider groups.

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### **A NEED FOR INFORMATION ABOUT GOOD MODELS**

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In question T5, local library literacy programs interested in increasing their technology use were asked to indicate specific programs and resources upon which they would like to model their own efforts. The question assumed that the local groups would have some familiarity with the technology usage of other programs.

The most remarkable thing about the overall response is its thinness. Only half of the respondents from question T1—where 73% of the local groups said they favored more use of computers—answered this question at all.

**T4. What are the 2-3 most significant barriers you face in bringing about more, and more effective, use of computers and distance learning technology (e.g. lack of software...lack of interest among library management, librarians, or the community...lack of hardware...network access)? [Q1-Q4]**

	Response	No Response
Q1 State Librarians (31 of possible 34 responded)	91%	9%
Q2 Library Agency Literacy Contact (37 of 38)	97	3
Q3 SLRC Heads (39 of 40)	98	2
Q4 Local Library Literacy Programs (54 of 59)	92	8

[Note: This question was answered primarily by persons answering “yes” to either of the questions about increased use of computers or distance learning technology. Some respondents indicating “not sure” also answered this question. Many of the respondents indicated more than one barrier.]

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	(% of Respondees Mentioning Item)			
Lack of funding/funding uncertainties	42%	5%	51%	39%
Lack of staff/trained staff/expertise	35	22	36	31
Lack of software/quality software/affordable software	23	19	26	35
Lack of understanding re uses/value/potential of technology	19	5	8	4
Lack of hardware/funds for hardware	19	38	56	26
Lack of network access/connectivity	16	22	31	15
Lack of interest/commitment from librarians/library mgmt	13	11	8	2
Lack of suitable training services/processes	10	19	15	7
Lack of time—to learn new technologies/undertake new services	10	3	3	7
Lack of information about resources/quality programs & models	10	16	15	2
Lack of community/general awareness	6	5	8	4
Need for more partnerships/collaborative efforts	6	5	3	
Infrastructure—variations in service from place to place	6	5		
Lack of resources/technology for non-literacy library services	3	3		
Lack of resources in remote areas	3			
Lack of space	3	14		26
Need for strategic planning/or a state plan	3		3	
Enabling legislation at state/federal levels	3			
Need for success stories to be publicized	3			
Need for adaptation/use of WWW technology	3	3		
Use of technology still at experimental level	3			
Fear of/discomfort with/resistance to computers	3	16	10	4
Main barriers are human; not technical	3			
Disarray in state government about who has responsibility	3			
Overcoming hype		3		
Overcoming territoriality		3	3	
Librarians won't let literacy personnel use their computers		3		
Volunteers/literacy educators reluctant/unable to use computers		5	5	6
Lack of understanding/interest among service providers			13	2
Lack of knowledge/understanding/experience			8	2
Sense of futility—everything's gong down the drain			3	
Programs don't even have modems			3	
Unequal/lack of access to technology			3	
Limited transportation prevents access				2
Lack of buy-in			3	
Limited media support			3	
Lack of trained creative service providers			3	
Rapidity of changes in technology field			3	2
Lack of hardware/software standardization/ research outdated before it can be implemented			3	2
Learners have little interest in computers				2
Administrative priorities				2
Rural areas hae special/needs and problems, often not recognized				4
Reliability of hardware/software & time spent troubleshooting				2
Student recruitment				2



**T5. If you want to increase your use of technology, indicate any programs or specific resources currently using technology, if any, upon which you would like to model your technology program. [Local Programs, Q4 only]**

We would like to have a computer lab with staff on site. We currently have computers for literacy instruction in two branches. They are not used as well as they could be. (*Partners in Reading, San Jose Public Library, CA*)

There is already a Justin Lab in our town so another program would be better. Haven't chosen any specific one yet. The school list has computers but most are not available for public use. (*Literacy Program, Mesa County Public Library District, CO*)

A learning laboratory. (*Hillsborough Literacy Council, Tampa-Hillsborough County Library System, FL*)

Learning center-family oriented. Educational software. (*Panhandle Library Literacy Consortium, Jefferson County Public Library, FL*)

NCAL. (*Libraries for Literacy in Lake County, Waukegan Public Library, IL*)

We would like to purchase more PLATO software, the ESL Ellis program, and more video tapes for use in our ESL program. (*Project Finish, Johnson County Library, KS*)

What our learners want to do is what most people want to do with computers—word processing. (*Read Write/Now Program, Springfield City Library-Mason Sq. Branch, MA*)

There are other technological solutions besides computers. My students find little hand-held "language masters" and translators very helpful. For some students, this is a better solution. (*Center for New Americans, Jones Library, MA*)

Programs utilizing all technologies where learners can relate via modem, in person, or by voice mail—crucial. (*Franklin Learning Center, Franklin Community Library, Minneapolis Public Library, MN*)

I don't know what is available. (*Literacy Center of Prendergast Library, NY*)

We are the model. (*Literacy Program, Brooklyn Public Library, NY*)

We would like to connect with programs who are using technology in ways that are compatible with our instructional approaches. The Brooklyn Public Library recently redesigned the technology component of their program—there are aspects of that program that we would like to incorporate into ours. (*Centers for Reading and Writing, New York Public Library, NY*)

One in the Fayetteville, AR library. (*Great Plains Literacy Council, Southern Prairie Library System, OK*)

Have not researched specific programs. There is no point until it becomes feasible for our program. The materials, software and hardware, are increasing at such a fast rate that research would be outdated before it could be implemented. (*Literacy Council of LeFlore County, Buckley Public Library, OK*)

LCC-Emerald Job Center (AFS). LCC Training & Development (displaced worker). (*LEARN Project, Eugene Public Library, OR*)

RDP has requested information from the Library of Michigan regarding its 7 Internet training centers. If relevant, RDP will adapt the training which is designed for all potential users. (*Reader Development Program, Free Library of Philadelphia, PA*)

Several programs in the state use technology, but most of these are large, urban programs. I'm not aware of any smaller, rural library based programs using technology. (*Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program, Bradford County Library, PA*)

The El Paso Community College, El Paso Independent School District, and West-Texas Community Supervision and Corrections Department have learning labs which will be used as models for our technology program. (*Literacy Center, El Paso Public Library, TX*)

We are looking at a phonics program (HEC) out of Utah, and the STAR program. (*Bridgerland Literacy, Logan Library, UT*)

Computerized adult testing, assessment and skills enhancement software on disks for pre-GED and Levels I and II and basic literacy. (*Literacy Program, Newport News Public Library, VA*)

Still learning. Any suggestions? (*Literacy Program, Seattle Public Library, WA*)

The T4 summary of barriers identifies critical areas that need attention. The Clinton administration is pushing technology use in schools... why not in libraries? A case can be made. (Jim Parker, U.S. Department of Education)

Moreover, some said straight out that they don't know or aren't yet aware of what might be available. Others make broad references to wanting learning centers or labs without citing any particular models...to wanting *all* the technology available...to wishing for computer software of one kind or another without connecting software type to need...to an array of wish-list items.

Only a small handful of the responses can be construed as showing real knowledge of how other programs are currently using technology and whether these models might be usefully applied locally.

One need that jumps out from Table T5 is the need for leadership to identify successful technology applications in adult literacy settings and communicate that to local programs in a clear and usable form.

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### **JOINING FORCES TO IMPROVE THE PROSPECTS**

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In question T6, SLRC heads were asked in what way they would work with their state library agency and local libraries to implement effective use of technology in library literacy programs. And in T6a, local programs were asked essentially the same thing, but with reference to a wider range of groups.

Again, assuming the financial capacity to do so, SLRCs would concentrate their efforts in a few areas: planning and development ...staff and tutor training ...sharing of expertise, materials, and other resources...provision of information and workshops on computers and technology... teleconferencing and communications activities... assessment of hardware and software needs... advocacy...development of Internet access and

**T6. In what way would you work with the state library agency and local libraries to implement effective use of technology in library literacy programs? [SLRC, Q3 only]**

(Note: 35 respondees, 88% response rate. Some respondees gave more than one answer.)

- Provide/share information on technology libraries/provide technical assistance (CO, DE, FL, IL, KY, NH, VA)
- Engage in planning and development work with them (CT, MI, MN, UT, WI)
- Provide training/staff training (IA, OH, OK, SD, KY)
- Work to expand Internet access for state libraries/local programs/teachers/students (NC, NM, TN, VA)
- Draw libraries into NIFL-funded electronic hub we are developing (AZ,CA, TN)
- Coordinate teleconferences/resources/equipment use (CO, OH, OK)
- Work to develop distance learning opportunities for/at library sites (NC, SD)
- Seek technology help from them—they have more resources & expertise (CO)
- Take part in technological network (AL)
- Link with them for loans and circulation (CT)
- Provide information to teachers about library programs (DE)
- Encourage use (IA)
- Conduct how-to-use computer workshops/services (IN)
- Hold jointly sponsored workshops and training (NJ)
- Merge with network of state library agency and local libraries so as to better communiacate with local providers (MD)
- Seek and/or offer funds to get local libraries on the Internet (MT)
- Plan comprehensively to share resources, training, advocacy (ND)
- Help assess hardware and software needs (NE)
- Help develop linkages with state library system (NE)
- Develop ABE software and video collections that can be viewed by local programs (NJ)
- Offer same services any other ABE/literacy program is given (PA)
- Provide computer access to material (SD)
- Having SLRC records built into the library database (VA)
- Expand tutoring and training services at local library sites (WV)
- Not sure (MO)
- Not applicable/as applicable (AK, MS,VT)

I was surprised in the technology area that funding was such a significant problem. I had mistakenly assumed that libraries and other programs often had access to sources of funds for technology and that obtaining specific equipment was not usually a problem. Clearly, the study indicates that funding of actual hardware is a challenge for many and often a critical problem. (Peter Waite, Laubach Literacy Action)

computer networking... and building links between and among state and local libraries, the SLRC, and other groups.

The SLRCs would apparently take basic responsibility for *initiating* and/or providing some of these services, but they also appreciate the need to work *with* the libraries—in cooperative planning, joint sponsorship of workshops, and the like.

They would in fact look *to* the libraries for help in some instances, however, believing them to have the superior technology resources and expertise—and in a few cases the state libraries are seen as holding the key to statewide access to materials. The Virginia SLRC would even like to have its materials drawn into the library database to make them more widely available—an interesting idea highlighted earlier.

Indeed, imbedded in the responses of many of the SLRCs is a sense that libraries have space and facilities that they themselves do not have but from which they and adult literacy groups around the state could benefit. Considering that so many SLRCs are in

abysmal financial straits, as will soon be evident, it is surprising that more of them did not explicitly say this.

In T6a, the thinking of local library literacy programs is identical in some respects to that of the SLRCs. Uppermost in their minds is the sharing of training, materials, or other resources, and staff development and training. Also of high interest is participation in state and local planning.

But local groups differ in some major ways as well. Not surprisingly, as local providers they are much more likely to *need* the services and resources of other groups than to be a *source* of help. They also name fundraising as a priority area of activity, and condition their other activities on being successful in this one. Clearly, however, they are ready and eager for meaningful new engagements, even wanting in a couple of cases to serve as demonstration sites.

The heavy need of local groups for help in identifying and developing appropriate software is underscored again in T6a. About 25%

**T6a. In what way would you work with local or state groups (e.g. the state library agency, local libraries, the state literacy resource center or statewide planning body, etc.) to implement effective use of technology in your program?** [Local Programs, Q4]

(Note: 42 of the 63 program directors taking part in the survey answered the question, for a response rate of 67%. Some respondents gave more than one answer.)

Share tutor technical training, curriculum, educational software, information, facilities, publications (AR, GA, MA, MN, NE, NJ, OR, PA)

Engage in staff development, and volunteer/staff training activities. (DE, FL, GA, VA)

Identify and develop appropriate computer software program for program management purposes (CA)

Work to develop better software; what's available isn't impressive (MA)

Turn to one or both of them, or a regional SLRC equivalent, as a source of instructional videos/software, in-service workshops, and/or evaluation of videos and software (CA, CA, KS, OK, OR, WA)

Develop instructional training videos (MA)

Develop information videos for the learning disabled (MA)

State library is a funding source/potential funding source (CA, MA)

Seek funds for trained personnel to implement technology we already have and provide staff technical training (FL)

Work with local school district or community college to be the downlink, if funds can be found to purchase the service (MI)

Serve as a demonstration site, if funding is available, to show how a public library can offer adult literacy instruction using the most technologically advanced methods. Otherwise work with local providers to develop and implement technological resources (FL, GA)

Seek help with fundraising (GA)

Involve adult learners in considering how computers are best used in their learning/work with State Library and adult learners to fully develop the use of computers we already have (CA, MA)

Develop cooperative student recruitment activities (FL)

Explore how to effectively incorporate families into a computer program (CA)

Join/remain active in/host statewide or local planning activities for improved use of technology/participate in advisory groups to this end (CA, MN, NY, OR, TX, WI)

Work with cooperative technology team whose members are located near one another (MA)

Work with one or both groups to develop staff training/support/effective use of Internet/develop Internet access (AR, CA, MA, MN, OK, RI)

Work with state library to develop Internet ESL services (MA)

**Table T6a, cont'd**

- Encourage and work with state library to mount an information site on the Internet, coordinate a listserv (NC)
- Request/provide information about effective basic reading and ESL software (NM, RI)
- Provide local and regional technology consulting services to SLRC and libraries (CO)
- Work to preserve the integrity of this community and the larger ecology it is part of. Computers are seductive, but can't learn or teach for us. They can homogenize our culture and dispossess vital small communities of their memories and meanings (IN)
- Seek technical assistance help to develop a more comprehensive component to our technology program—to identify appropriate hardware/software, evaluate students' use of computers, improve and refine training activities, and develop linkages to other literacy groups trying to implement technology (NY)
- Seek cooperation of the state library literacy office in researching programs throughout the state that might be adapted to use in ours (OK)
- Reach out to/network with local programs that can show us how computers and distance learning technology would be useful to programs like ours (NY, WV)
- Encourage and participate in networking to reduce problem of library literacy programs being isolated from one another (NY)
- Develop easy-to-understand voter information (MA)
- Seek training and technical assistance from state library (WV)
- Undertake joint awareness/advocacy activities (FL)
- There is no time or personnel, nor a secure computer (NJ)
- We would help ourselves (UT)

of the respondees want to work with state level groups in developing video and computer software for instructional, training, program management, or informational purposes. They know firsthand that the wares being promoted by software manufacturers and others are too often not suitable for their purposes and adult constituencies.

The desire is also strong to work with the SLRCs and libraries to develop Internet access and services, and to develop network linkages to other local library literacy programs. In fact, a number of the responses reveal that local programs suffer from working in isolation from one another.

It should be noted that to save space, Tables

T6 and T6a are distillations of much longer tables from the background data book. To illustrate the flavor of some of those first-person responses, however, here is a sampling from the data book:

The Illinois SLRC is “gathering data and technology features of public and school libraries in communities with funded literacy programs to evaluate current capabilities, provide the appropriate materials, look at the potential, and identify resources to reach that potential. [They] will know from this information what types of materials to purchase for the state resource center collection.”

“The Maryland State Library Agency and local libraries are operating The Sailor Network that [the SLRC] will merge with to communicate with local providers.”

The Tennessee SLRC is “involved in developing a World Wide Web-based infrastructure of literacy and adult basic education stakeholders, in cooperation with the National Institute for Literacy. As this work expands to the regional

and local level, [they] will involve libraries in training and using the Internet, specifically the Literacy Information and Communications System (LINCS).”

“The state library agency relationship [in West Virginia] has not been strong,” says the SLRC head there. “Local libraries can (and sometimes do) serve as community sites for training and tutoring. This could be expanded.”

A common frustration expressed by the San Jose Public Library Partners in Reading program is a concern about the lack of effective administrative software for program management. “The California State Library contracted with a software developer over five years ago to create a [computer] program,” she said, “but it had so many problems that most [literacy] programs abandoned it. We now each have to ‘reinvent the wheel’ to get software that collects the data and creates the reports we need for accountability. Much administrative time is spent collecting data for a variety of funders, and the data requested is different for each.”

The Center for Adult Learning in Florida's Jacksonville Public Library "was initiated in 1984 as a demonstration project under an LSCA Title I grant from the state library. [They] would be thrilled to be given the opportunity to become a demonstration project again as an example of how a public library can offer instruction to adults in the most technologically advanced methods. Over the past 11 years, many other public libraries have come to [them] for advice and recommendations in setting up similar literacy programs."

The MARC Literacy Program of the Greenville Public Library in Michigan "can arrange with [its] local school district or community college to be the downlink, but [they] don't have the money to purchase the service." They propose to work on a committee to investigate networking and ways to reduce costs to potential users.

"If there were any state programs that would show us how technology would be useful to us," says the Prendergast Library literacy program, "we would like to take

part. In Western New York, library-sponsored literacy programs seem isolated from one another. There is little networking with the state or with other libraries."

And the Readers Development Program in Philadelphia "will continue to work cooperatively with the National Center on Adult Literacy, the Mayor's Commission on Literacy, Drexel University's Community Outreach program, and other literacy groups in Philadelphia."

Finally, one of the most haunting and unforgettable passages of this entire study. It comes from the Knox County Public Library in Vincennes, Indiana, and serves to remind everyone that technology is not a panacea. It also is an admonition: the benefits of technology use need to be tempered by a sober realization that some applications have the power to destroy important human values! The director of the literacy program there puts it this way:

**"[We will work] in ways that preserve the**

**integrity of this community and the larger ecology it is part of. Computers are very seductive, but they can't learn for us or teach for us, and they run the risk of homogenizing our culture, dispossessing vital small communities of their memories and meaning, in order to be able to reach their audience."**

### 3: PLANNING

Section 3 looks at the planning context in which library literacy programs operate. One cluster of questions considers if and to what extent the state libraries are involved in statewide planning for adult literacy.

Another cluster examines the degree to which, in the eyes of state librarians and their literacy staffs, state libraries have regular working relations with key state and national literacy, library, and political entities, including SLRCs.

A third line of questioning focuses specifically on SLRCs, the groups established by the National Literacy Act as the state-level counterparts to the National Institute for Literacy.

SLRCs were included in the study because they were presumed to have the central statewide planning and resource development role envisioned for them in their enabling legislation. If they are operating as intended, it would be impossible to consider the present and future

circumstances of state libraries and library literacy programs without also considering theirs.

It should be noted that at the time the survey was taken, a few of the responding SLRCs had either already closed due to lack of funding or were on the verge of doing so. Their heads/former heads were invited to participate in the study anyway because of the valuable perspectives they could contribute.

#### STATE LIBRARIES IN STATEWIDE PLANNING

According to SLRCs in the 40 states involved in this study, **32 states (85%) have a statewide planning body** or some kind of coordinated mechanism for integrated planning and resource development (P1). On the face of it, this is very encouraging news. (The states reported *not* to have such a capacity are Connecticut, Kansas, North Dakota, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Tennessee.)

Moreover, **the majority of state library agencies appear to be involved in that statewide planning.**

**P1. Does your state have a statewide literacy planning body or some coordinated mechanism for integrated planning and resource development?** [SLRC, Q3]

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Q3 SLRCs (40 of 40 responded)	85%	15%	0

**P2. Is your (state library agency, SLRC) a member of a/the statewide literacy planning body/structure in your state?** [Q1-Q3]

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Q1 State Librarians (35 of 35)	86%	14%	0
Q2 Library Agency Literacy Contacts (34 of 44)	76	21	3
Q3 SLRC Heads (39 of 40)	77	23	0

**P3. Which of the following organizations in your state are involved in cooperative statewide planning, policy, and resource development?** [Q3 only]

Q3 SLRCs (39 of 40, 98% response rate)	% of Respondees Citing Item
State department of education/ABE division	90%
Other state agencies/departments	80
Voluntary literacy groups (e.g. LVA, Laubach)	75
State library agency	69
Governor's office	67
Community-based organizations	67
Community Colleges	56
Businesses in the state	49
Local libraries	44
4-year colleges/universities	44
Schools	41
State legislature	39
State/local ESL groups	39
State Center for the Book	5
Other	8

The library personnel say (in P2) that most state libraries are members of this statewide literacy planning body (from 76%-86% of them). Curiously, there is a significant difference in the positive response rates of librarians and their designated literacy professionals. Moreover, *all* state

librarians responded to the question, while only 77% of library agency literacy professionals did. One can only speculate on the meaning of these differences. One group appears to be better informed than the other. Again, it would seem that communications between the two levels could be better than it is. Not shown in Table P2, but evident in the

background data, is another curious inconsistency. Librarians indicate no involvement in state planning in Iowa, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, and Texas. But the library agency literacy personnel named only two of those states as uninvolved (Maryland and Texas) and added four others (Connecticut, Kentucky, New York, and South Carolina), none of which were cited by their bosses.

Furthermore, only one state named by state library literacy respondents as uninvolved, Connecticut, was also named by the SLRCs. This variance suggests again that a good many of the respondees aren't adequately informed about the library planning role—pointing again to inadequate communications between and among the groups, and also suggesting that many SLRCs may be sideline participants rather than active leaders of statewide planning, something that later data will show to be the case.

Nevertheless, the majority of state library agencies do seem to have at least some involvement

in statewide planning. And the point is further reinforced by the SLRCs in Table P3. Here they indicate that nearly 70% of state library agencies are involved in statewide planning, policy, and resource development.

Furthermore, their response indicates that **state libraries are more involved than all other groups in the state**—including governor's offices—except for state departments of education, other state agencies, and voluntary literacy organizations (LVA and Laubach).

Three other findings are significant as well. First and foremost, the dominant role of state education departments literally jumps off the page. Second, some 44% of local libraries appear to have a voice in statewide planning, a pleasant if unexpected finding. Third, according to the SLRCs, nearly 50% of the statewide planning that regularly occurs across the country has *business* involvement, a much larger involvement than expected.

Back to the main point, though, whatever the problems and incon-

<b>P3a. Which organizations in the state regularly receive adult literacy services from the SLRC and/or from OTHER STATE ENTITIES? [Q3 only]</b>			
Q3	(39 of 40 responded, 98%)	SLRC	Other State Entities
Community-based organizations	95%	51%	
Voluntary literacy groups			
(e.g. LVA, Laubach)	92	49	
Other state agencies/depts.	90	51	
State education department/			
ABE division	85	46	
Local libraries	77	39	
State/local ESL groups	77	39	
Schools	77	46	
Community colleges	74	46	
Businesses in the state	69	41	
State library agency	67	33	
4-year colleges/universities	62	39	
Governor's office	59	31	
State legislature	39	28	
State Center for the Book	18	8	
Other	13	3	

  

<b>P4. With which of the following organizations in the STATE does the STATE LIBRARY maintain ongoing working relations to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy? [Q1-Q2]</b>			
Q1	(32 of 35 responded, 91%)	Q2	(38 of 44 responded, 86%)
		State Librarian	Library Agency Literacy Contact
SLRC	77%	70%	
ABE/State Education Department	77	73	
Governor's office	66	55	
Voluntary groups	66	55	
ESL organizations	43	32	
Businesses in the state	40	39	
State legislature	49	41	
Community colleges	37	41	
Other	26	27	

sistencies, *more* involvement of the libraries is better than *less* from the standpoint of developing their role in adult literacy. There is evidently a substantial base on which to build. What is less clear is what that involvement adds up to in terms of having a real voice in the literacy affairs of the state. Data gathered elsewhere in the study suggest that although there are many firmly committed state libraries/librarians, the engagement of many others is superficial.

### THE SLRC ROLE

Questions P3a, P4, and P5 look at the service and planning role of the SLRCs with respect to libraries and other groups in the states from two perspectives: that of library agency personnel and that of the SLRCs themselves. Four interrelated issues are probed:

Which groups most benefit from the SLRCs services? To what extent do the public libraries benefit? What is the nature and extent of the SLRC service/technical assistance role as compared to other state sources? And, if the

**P5. Congress has cut funding for the SLRCs beginning next year. These centers were a major provision of the National Literacy Act of 1991 which recognized the need for state-level counterparts to the National Institute for Literacy. The centers are presently at various stages of development. Some will survive the federal funding withdrawal, others may not. If the library agency has a strong working relationship with the SLRC, please indicate as best you can what kind of help the SLRC gives you at present (e.g. planning and policy assistance, resource development, program/staff development, help in adapting research to practice).** [Q1, Q2]

Q1	State Librarians (25 of 35, 71%)	Q1	Q2
Q2	State Agency Literacy Contacts (41 of 44, 93%)	(# of times cited)	
	None (AL, NE, RI, FL, NJ, TX, VA)	3	4
	Very little (FL, WI, HI, LA, MA, SC, TN, WV, WI)	2	7
	Provides statistics, research data, and other information (AR, MS, TN, CO, ID, MD, MO, OR)	3	6
	The State Library is the literacy resource center (DC, HI, IL, MT, OK)	4	2
	The Center has closed/may close due to federal funding cuts (FL, GA, IL)	3	1
	Resources/resource development (LA, ND, NH, PA, MN, ND, SD)	4	3
	Provide/support training and staff development (MI, MS, NH, PA, MO, WA)	4	2
	Planning and coordination (MI, PA, TN, CA, OR)	3	2
	Sharing of staff, space, cataloguing, and other resources (MN, OH, SD, IN, OH, SD)	4	2
	Give us access to instructional networks/help bring library services and materials collections to the attention of local literacy programs/make hotline referrals to local programs (WV, IA, ID, IN, MS, NY)	2	4
	Help in developing collections (CO, WA)		2
	We can borrow from their materials collection (IN, NM)		2
	Awareness/promotes understanding and awareness of need for services within the library community (MN, WY)		2
	Disseminate data on effective techniques and programs (MI)	1	
	They give us a presence in literacy circles (IA)	1	
	Evaluation of programs (MI)	1	
	They mobilize phone and letter campaigns for legislative influence (NH)	1	
	Interlibrary loans (NV)	1	
	Provide technical assistance to local library literacy programs (PA)	1	
	Help adapt research to practice (PA)	1	
	It is the lead agency in our state (IA)	1	
	Provides basic consulting services (IN)		1
	Program development help (NH)		1
	They are a source of grant reviewers (NY)		1
	They include their material in our database, thus increasing statewide access to literacy information and services (VT)		1
	They sponsor conferences we attend (VT)		1
	Don't know (OR)	1	
	Not applicable (AK)	1	

Note: This table is a distillation of responses that appear in original form in the background data book.



**P6. With which of the following NATIONAL organizations does the STATE LIBRARY maintain ongoing working relations to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy?** [Q1-Q2]

	State Librarian	Library Agency Literacy Contact
Q1 State Librarians (31 of 35 responded, 88%)		
Q2 State Agency Literacy Contact (33 of 44, 75%)		
American Library Association	80%	59%
U.S. Department of Education	80	59
National Center for Library & Information Sciences (NCLIS)	54	32
Center for the Book	54	43
LVA/Laubach	46	32
National Institute for Literacy	40	30
Businesses	31	11
National Center for Adult Literacy	29	18
National Coalition for Literacy	20	11
Clearinghouse for Adult Literacy/ESL Education of Center for Applied Linguistics	17	9
Other	6	9

**P6a. With which of the following NATIONAL organizations does the SLRC maintain ongoing working relations to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy?** [Q3 only]

Q3 SLRCs (39 of 40 responded, 98%)	
U.S. Department of Education	95%
National Institute for Literacy	93
National Center for Adult Literacy	83
LVA/Laubach	70
Clearinghouse for Adult Literacy/ESL Education of Center for Applied Linguistics	50
Businesses	48
National Coalition for Literacy	30
U.S. Department of Labor	28
National Governor's Association	25
U.S. Congress	23
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services	18
American Library Association	10
NCLIS	10
Center for the Book	10
Other	8

zations and voluntary literacy groups rely to an extraordinary degree on the SLRCs. So do state education departments and other state agencies. It is easy to see why considering that some 40% of SLRCs are units within (controlled by) state education departments (Table P9).

State and local ESL groups, schools, and community colleges also get substantial SLRC support, as do local libraries and the state library agencies. Indeed, library groups apparently get twice as much support from SLRCs as from all other state entities combined.

**TIES THAT BIND: STATE-LEVEL LINKS**

The library personnel were asked with which of several state organizations they maintain working relations *to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy*.

SLRCs and state education departments (virtually the same thing in 40% of the cases) rank way at the top. Next in the ranking are governor's offices and voluntary organizations, though state librarians see a stronger

SLRCs have the key role now, can libraries (along with other literacy stakeholders in the states) count on them as a continuing source of leadership and help?

Of great importance, SLRCs and library personnel alike see SLRCs as the main source of planning and resource development help to libraries and other literacy

stakeholders in their states. Beyond this, several of the specific findings are quite dramatic: Community-based organi-

**P6b. In a sentence or two, what kind of national-level help not now being provided would the state library agency like to have?** [Q1, Q2]

DE Grants to local libraries or state library agencies for literacy programming. (Q1)

DE More assistance in developing and promoting information on literacy programs. (Q2)

IL It would make life simpler if at least some of the national organizations could adopt a collaborative approach and future planning mechanism (i.e. decide jointly what they can offer to state and local programs after input from programs and then delegate functions so there's less duplication and their services get to programs). (Q2)

IN We need greater coordination of programs and efforts from the various national level organizations. Our resources are too limited to pick and choose who and what we can support. (Q1)

OH Over the years different staff have had the responsibility to work with literacy. An ALA-sponsored training program in the late 70's was attended by our staff. Staff have also written documents on literacy which have been distributed not only in state but made available to requesters across the nation. Not sure what is available from all the organizations. (Q1, Q2)

OK National awareness and promotion of volunteer and library-based literacy programs is needed. (Q2)

OR We are satisfied with our contacts at the national level. (Q1)

TX Funding and/or materials. (Q2)

working link in these cases than their literacy professionals do. Similarly, state librarians are much more likely to perceive a working relationship with ESL organizations in their states (43%) than do their library literacy personnel (32%). The differences are important, especially in the ESL area, though not directly explainable from the data gathered.

The two groups of

library personnel were also asked what *kind* of help they presently get from the SLRCs.

A number of respondents in both categories indicated that they receive no assistance or very little. It is odd, however, that in only one state (Wisconsin) do Q1 and Q2 groups both give this response. Again, there is reason to believe that some of the responses

here, as elsewhere, are guesses rather than informed answers.

Nevertheless, there is nearly total agreement on how they most benefit from the help of the SLRCs: research and information services... resource development assistance...staff development and training... and planning and coordination generally—the very services that SLRCs were legislated to provide.

The SLRCs are also seen as important to developing and providing access to library collections—with the libraries in some cases being able to draw on SLRC collections. Indeed, *sharing* of collections and other resources, including staff, is an oft-cited gain.

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### **TIES THAT BIND: NATIONAL LINKS**

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One would expect *local* library literacy programs to work more with groups at the local and state levels, but effective leadership and planning by *state-level* entities requires strong ties to the national organizations where overall

policy and funding decisions are shaped.

Thus, in P6 and P6a state library people and the SLRCs were asked if they work on a regular basis with a wide range of key national literacy,

Coordination at the national level is critical since what happens there will determine the roles at the state level. The survey data includes comments again and again on the unrest of the future of funding, the need to maximize any available funding, and the need for coordination. [A quote from] South Dakota captures the dilemma: *The leadership for a secure funding base needs to come from the federal level. Illiteracy is not a Democratic or Republican issue. It affects all citizens and impacts our economic growth.* (Bridget Lamont, State Librarian, IL)

**P7. Federal funding for the SLRCs was rescinded for FY95 and has not yet been appropriated for FY96. The centers are presently (as of 10/26/95) reauthorized for the period 1997-2002 in bills now pending in the House and Senate. There is thus some chance that funding will be restored in 1997. Moreover, one bill presently under consideration would not place the provision for the centers in block grant funding to the states. The SLRCs are presently at various stages of development. Some are more vulnerable than others to federal funding decisions. How has your center and the state's adult literacy affairs already been affected by current federal cuts; what does the future hold if funding is not restored?** [Q3 only]

Q3 SLRCs (38 of 40 responded, 95%)

Note: The Georgia SLRC did not respond to the survey questionnaire at all, but a separate communication from a state official is included in this table for the information it provides.

AL N.R.

AK We (the SLRC) give 100% of our funds to our regional center (Northwest Regional Literacy Resource Center at network in Seattle) so the funding cut will not affect statewide operations.

AZ [The] Adult Literacy & Technology Resource Center, Inc. [has already] lost \$103,722.

CA SLRC-California is now in 3rd year of federal funding and is secure as exists now through September 1996. If funding is not allocated as specific set-aside in block grants, not yet clear at what level SLRC will be maintained. Clearly will not disappear but not sure at exactly what level funding will be. The State Collaborative Literacy Council, which was created to administer SLRC, is committed to continuing the effort no matter what happens to federal \$ but has not yet been able to develop a concrete plan for beyond Sept. 30, 1996.

CO Direct effects not yet felt, but since we are totally federally funded, loss of these dollars means our demise. Block grants to governor's office more than likely dooms us as well. We have lost adult education for homeless \$.

CT Funding for the position of state literacy coordinator and for materials is gone. If federal funding is not restored, the literacy resource center will continue to be funded by the Capitol Region Education Council and by sale of services to agency members of the Resource Center. This is the means currently being employed to sustain the Center for FY95-96.

DE Caused 50% staff reduction. Limited research time. Funding permits some operation until 9/30/96. Center will probably close if not funded.

FL The Florida Adult Literacy Resource Center closed July 31, 1995 as a result of the federal budget rescission of 1995. This took away a catalyst which was just beginning to inform a well-developed public/private partnership. This took the better part of three years. Loss of this resource will set the state's literacy delivery system back to its former random and inequitable approach to development. (former director, FL SLRC)

GA Letter from Asst Commissioner: The Georgia Literacy Resource Center is temporarily closed, due to termination of federal funding. Center activities will resume as funds are identified and made available, and program operations restructured to meet program goals. Currently, ongoing staff development workshops for adult literacy practitioners are being developed and conducted at the resource center as part of our adult literacy program activities. Specific program operations will resume contingent upon the new funding sources.

HI N.R.

IA No impact through June 1996. Then, 50-75% cut in funds anticipated: reduction in staff, services, acquisition. Operations will be restricted to maintenance level: check-in/out, little if any acquisition, promotion etc. unless funding restored.

library, and government organizations.

There are profound differences of opinion between the two library groups. A full 80% of state librarians say that they have strong working relations with both the American Library Association and the U.S. Department of Education. Less than 60% of the library literacy contacts think so. Some 54% of the librarians say that their State Agency also has strong links with the National Center for Libraries & Information Science (NCLIS). This tie is much lower according to state agency literacy professionals.

Both categories of library respondents are probably right. State librarians would reasonably be expected to have a larger sense, in general, of their organization's national working ties. But their literacy staffs almost certainly understand better whether the connections are for the purpose of "advancing adult literacy." Even granting this explanation, however, information gathered from consultations with the Office of Educational Research and Improvement and others

suggests that the library literacy respondents are too high in their estimates as well.

Consider the following: In the 1980s, the American Library Association visibly championed the cause of literacy, with its Ad Council campaign igniting an adult literacy movement that had remained on the march until recently stalled by federal funding and policy changes. Many persons interviewed, however, believe that the ALA “dropped the ball” and is not currently a major literacy force—at least not in a way that would call for substantial state library involvement.

[Note: In fact, the ALA’s focus over the past five years has been family literacy, with most of the adult literacy budget devoted to that. Moreover, the ALA has always been and still is the glue that holds together the National Coalition for Literacy.]

What about the U.S. Department of Education link? On the one hand, it is hard to imagine that the working relationship *for literacy purposes* is very deep, considering that Title VI of the Library

**Table P7, cont’d**

- IL Depending on the legislation which emerges related to State Resource Centers, our agency may or may not be the SRC in the future. If dollars for SRC’s go to SEA’s that agency in Illinois will probably operate the SRC. The work we’ve done over the past 3 1/2 years will impact the way that ISBE would run a state resource center. We anticipate that services of the SLRC would be open to all partners in the adult literacy/ education arena and not just LEA’s There would also be an emphasis on funding projects or activities in the train-the-trainer mode. The Interagency Coordinating Committee of the Illinois Literacy Council would presumably continue in some form to ensure this ongoing coordination.
- IN Change of administration. Reduction in staff (from 10 to 2.5). Additional potential downsizing if funding not restored.
- KS Our SLRC was an expansion of the existing Adult Education Resource Center funded with 353 funds. When the federal funds dry up, it will go back to being the Adult Education Resource Center if Adult Ed funds can still be used for that purpose under the new legislation.
- KY The Kentucky Center for Adult Education and Literacy will continue services to local providers at a minimal level. The materials collection will be maintained, with few new acquisitions. Newsletters, publications, and trainings will be continued through cost recovery. Technical assistance, research, and policy planning will be continued as special project funds are received.
- LA Unless the 1996 Regular Session of the Legislature restores General Fund will take office on January 8.
- MD Federal funding for the SLRC ended June 30, 1995. As a result, services have been reduced. Currently monies are being used to provide a comprehensive professional staff development program. We have limited materials purchasing and distribution and have consolidated three regional centers into two.
- MI The State of Michigan immediately replaced much of the “lost” federal funds and our Dept. of Education will continue to do so. Budgets will be reduced by 1/2 in the future (beginning in January). Result: services to the field will be fee-based, graduate assistantships go from 2 to 1, will not be sponsoring dissertation research, will not be sponsoring teacher field-based inquiry.
- MN Our budget has been cut to about a third of its previous level, and our staff has been cut from two to one person. We are currently funded with section 353 money. Complicating matters in MN, our Department of Education was abolished as of 9/30/95, and we now have a Department of Children, Families, and Learning. The new department combines the old dept. of ed. with programs related to youth and families from Health and Human Services, and Labor. With this restructuring is a reexamination of how the agency is spending its dollars. Combined with the uncertain federal situation, I am pessimistic about our center’s ability to continue without the reauthorization and set-aside funding. Our center is too new to be effective at finding alternative (non-government) funding sources.
- MO We are a nonprofit and raise funds year round. State has begun giving small grant (\$70,000). State DESE helps with funds. Adult literacy has gone to the state for an increase in funding to compensate for loss of [federal] funds.
- MS Shaky. We have funding for some staff through June 30, 1996. We are writing grant applications for FY96-97. We have proposed legislation being written.
- MT So far, not affected. We did not use 1994 funding, and we have requested and received permission to extend period of time during which these funds may be expended.
- NC Because we are very new (June 1994) we are still using FY1994 funds and will be in business through Sept. 1996. After that our future is unclear. If federal funding is restored, we are likely to remain operative; if not I do not know what will happen. NC is undergoing changes in community college structures which would affect us, and the Workforce Commission may want to redesign our affiliation.

**Table P7, cont'd**

ND N.R.

NE Presently, we have already experienced a reduction in the kinds and amount of staff development opportunities we can offer. We have reduced Center staffing (some clerical support) and have reassessed our priorities in terms of purchasing materials for program use across the state. We anticipate continuing to function as the SLRC through next spring, using carry-over monies from FY94-95, but with a reduction in outreach. Future: When these funds have been exhausted, we will revert back to the primary research and development function which our Institute held prior to being identified as the SLRC for Nebraska. This would mean no longer purchasing materials for use in the lending library, further reductions in staff, and reducing or eliminating many other outreach efforts.

NH The Center was not funded for FY96. The Center will continue to be closed if funding is not restored.

NJ Our SLRC is currently operating on FY94 grant monies. Thus all SLRC functions related to training and technical assistance will continue. These functions are currently supported by funds provided through the Adult Education Act, Section 353, and will not be affected if funds are not restored. Activities related to governmental and agency cooperation will continue, but on a more restricted basis as other resources allow. Library services provided will become limited to the time staffing resources will allow.

NM The Coalition received a total of over \$130,000 over the past three years for the SLRC. No additional state funding has since been allocated to support this program. The approximate 30% increase in training, technical assistance, and related services realized in each of the past three years will be lost, and without other funding to replace the SLRC funds, cutbacks will be made in staffing, training, and materials purchases.

NY The Center is currently operating on "no cost extension" of FY94 SED and DSS Funds. As of 12/30/95 these extensions end, and the NY SLRC will cease to exist. The School of Education-SUNY Albany is seeking foundation funding to develop a resource center. However, should such funding be realized, the Center's relationship with NYSED will have to be determined.

OH We are continuing at 70% level this year with 353 funds and state match in state budget. We anticipate similar funding for another year after this one.

OK Caused reduction of staff (50%). Services are limited by lack of research time and preparation of papers. Funding adequate until 9-30-96. I anticipate that Center will close if funding not forthcoming.

PA Presently the SLRC function is being funded by carryover funds from the previous federal grant(s). The SLRC function in PA is being "scaled back," and other funding to support the functions is being pursued. Under current funding constraints it is expected that the SLRC function will be limited to just publication and dissemination of 353 projects for FY96-97.

SC Our funding has been cut by more than half, but our workload has more than doubled. We are finding ourselves providing training for regular K-12 teachers to justify the SDE picking up the slack in our funding.

SD No additional materials purchased for use by literacy councils. No funds for training are available. The literacy resource center will continue to assist providers with location and access to existing materials as its only responsibility. No state funds will be made available.

TN We have no SLRC funding for this FY, but the Center for Literacy Studies continues with other funding to do some of the same work (but not all). Without federal funding we expect future work of the Center for Literacy Studies to be less state-focussed, providing fewer resources to Tennessee literacy programs.

UT The bulk of our funds are federal; however, we remain very optimistic and are carrying on with same level of funds.

Services & Construction Act (LSCA) is the only funding ever designated for library literacy *and* that the bulk of the funds (94%) has been administered directly to local programs instead of state libraries.

On the other hand, it is significant that OERI has required all local proposals to be "commented on" by their respective state libraries as a condition of LSCA funding, so even though the state libraries have not had a review and approval role, OERI's local grants have been made with their full awareness and support. Moreover, national panels set up by OERI for proposal review purposes have had some state library representation over the years. So, the working relationship between the Department and the libraries is real if not extensive.

[Note: LSCA Title VI funding was recently shifted to Title I, but it is not earmarked for literacy, partly because the ALA's Washington Office doesn't favor earmarks in the present economic and political climate.]

The NCLIS, a major force in the library world,

**Table P7, cont'd**

VT Vermont received such a small SLRC grant - \$18,000 - that the loss of the money was not a crisis. The funding was used to implement the work plan of the Vermont Literacy Board (as outlined earlier). We need to fundraise to support the newsletter and our director is unable to attend staff development events (such as conferences), and our support of the New England Literacy Resource Center was cut.

VA Massive cuts in this year's budget meant personnel reduction (support staff) and reducing a full-time librarian's job into a part-time position—which will slow down the process of getting the Center's holdings (about 12,000 titles) online and converting records into MARC. Services are affected and certain components of our project (i.e., the field-testing and evaluation of instructional materials by some 25 teachers statewide) have to be deleted from the budget. Production of the Learning Resources Evaluation Manual and the AE Curricula Resource Catalog (an annually produced product) was also deleted from the budget. Travel for staff has been drastically cut (with some professional staff with no travel at all in the budget), thus restricting the training activities we'd aggressively targeted in our plan to a minimum. Also, there's no money for promotional products for the SLRC, and no money for external evaluation and marketing to build awareness. If the SLRC funding is not restored, our SLRC cannot meet the needs of our AE and literacy field. We cannot expand services and be state-of-the-art.

WA Budget reduced - RLC \$ replaced by 4 states, mostly w/353 \$. Intent for 7-1-96 to 6-30-97 is to continue to operate as a state center.

WI The WI Literacy Resource network staffing has been dramatically scaled back. Adult education program planning is conservative, with no planned increase in funded services. Volunteer literacy organizations are becoming more involved in local and state planning and service delivery. The state has adopted a posture which would not replace funds lost by federal cuts. The assistant state director of the WI Technical College System Board is actively involved in interagency planning.

WV Technically, our center no longer exists. Almost all of our funding went directly to providers for training, materials, and maintenance of an 800 adult education phone line (as well as a statewide newsletter, Networks). All of these services will be drastically cut or they will end without future funding.

highly promising new leadership initiative, which it helped shape. In a \$6.3 million library literacy grant program of the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, the ALA has just been funded for three years to give ongoing conference and other technical supports to a group of 13 local libraries which have been awarded demonstration grants to develop and publicize their adult literacy programs as national models.

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**NATIONAL SLRC TIES**

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The SLRCs were also asked about *their* national links. A few findings are worth highlighting.

Their strongest connections—to the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute for Literacy—are to be expected considering that these federal organizations are their primary source of funding and guidance.

But their heavy contact with the University of Pennsylvania's National Center for Adult Literacy is a bit of a surprise considering the constraints under which they operate. They apparently make a serious effort to stay in touch with new research.

is another question mark. In 1990, the organization took a visible interest in adult literacy in preparation for the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services. Working with the Public Library Data Service of the ALA, it gathered information on the nature and extent of adult literacy services in several hundred local public libraries. Armed with this data, it offered resolutions and recommendations at the

conference in support of both adult and youth literacy (though the focus then, as now, was on K-12 students).

However, with this statement made, NCLIS moved on to other things. It has done no further data collection on library involvement in literacy (and neither has the ALA's Public Library Data Service). Moreover, in the last four or five years it has undertaken no new literacy initiatives and

does not plan to do so in the future, according to a spokesperson there.

It should be noted, of course, that NCLIS' annual budget was reduced by 25% this year—to about \$750,000—making it hard for the group to pursue more than a few priorities at a time.

It should also be noted that whatever the ALA's recent role in literacy, the group is about to embark on an exciting and

**P8. What is the SLRC's specific role in statewide planning, policy, and resource development?** [SLRC, Q3 only]

Q3 SLRCs (39 responses of 40 possible, 98%)	
Participate(d) in planning, policy, and resource development as a member of a council or commission (HI, NC, NH, NM, OH, OK, SC, TN, VT, WV)	10
Coordinate planning and resource development across agencies/focal point for statewide coordination (IL, LA, AK, MI, MO, MS, MT, PA, VA)	9
Acquire/provide/disseminate materials to the field (CA, IA, IN, MS, ND, SD, VA, WI)	8
Initiate/provide(d) research services/information to inform state planning, policy and resource development (FL, IN, KY, MD, NE, NY, WI)	7
Responsible for/provide staff development/training (CA, LA, MD, ND, SD, WI, WV)	7
Assist State Department of Education, state advisory council, or other statewide body with planning and resource development (AL, CO, MN, NE)	4
Provide technical assistance to local and/or state groups (DE, ND, VA)	3
Conduct needs assessment (UT, WI)	2
Support staff development (IA,NY)	2
Advise governor's office (NE)	1
Promote new adult readers (IA)	1
Operate statewide hotline and referral service (VA)	1
Share resources (CT)	1
Promote/fund pooling of resources and training of trainers (IL)	1
Recommend acquisitions (UT)	1
Provide technical assistance to all state Even Start programs (SC)	1
Develop curricula for ABE/workplace programs (SC)	1
Facilitative role (NJ)	1
Provide access to literacy materials through online catalog (SD)	1
Work with Congressional delegation on public policy work (MI)	1
Policy development (MS)	1
Provide communications link (VA)	1
Virtually none (WA)	1

with the ALA and NCLIS. Only 10% of them work with these two groups. Once again, they do not seem to be giving much attention to libraries as agents for the delivery of adult basic skills service.

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**THE NATIONAL HELP LIBRARIES NEED**

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Next, in P6b, librarians and library agency literacy contacts were invited to consider what national-level help not now being provided they would like to have (to advance their agency's role in adult literacy). Very few answered the question, but those who did echoed refrains found throughout the study:

More—and more stable—funding! Providing information and materials! Conducting awareness activities! Help with program coordination and collaboration! Planning assistance!

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**URGENT NEED TO RESCUE SLRCs**

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All other questions in section 3 (P7-P11) were directed solely to the SLRCs. They look at the finances and financial health of the SLRCs and at the range and type

Their extensive contact with the national Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach organizations is not

surprising, considering that many library literacy programs are actually LVA and Laubach affiliate operations.

But in light of this study's focus, the most provocative finding (in P6a) is the extremely *low* contact that SLRCs have

<b>P8a. Please indicate the SLRC's current annual budget. [SLRC, Q3 only]</b>			
<b>P9. If SLRC is not free-standing please give name of organization it is technically part of (e.g. state department of education, state coalition). [SLRC, Q3 only]</b>			
	P8a — Budget		P9 — Name of parent organization
Alaska	\$1,000,000		Nine Star Enterprises, a 501(c)3 literacy org.
Missouri	900,000		
New York	898,278	Terminated 12/31/95	School of Education, SUNY Albany
California	870,000	Plus \$80,000 in-kind staff	
Mississippi	389,000		Institutions of Higher Learning
Arizona	327,866		A nonprofit organization
Illinois	327,000	Enough to go to 12/96	Secretary of State Literacy Office, State Library
Ohio	304,000		Kent State University
Virginia	292,362	For FY 95-96	
New Jersey	224,642		NJ Dept of Ed, Employment & Training Comm
Hawaii	187,575	Payroll & supplies	Hawaii State Public Library System
Michigan	180,000		State Department of Education
Alabama	158,269		State Department of Education
Louisiana	153,907		Governor's Office of Lifelong Learning
Washington	131,000	For 7/95-6/96	Funds from Seattle Central Community College
Indiana	130,000		Indiana Literacy Foundation, Inc. as of 7/95; some new State Library administration
Utah	127,556		State Department of Education
New Mexico	120,000		Administered by the NM Coalition for Literacy
Oklahoma	100,262		State Department of Libraries
Wisconsin	92,000		Wisconsin Technical College System Board
Kentucky	90,500		KY Dept for Adult Education & Literacy, Cabinet for Workforce Development
South Carolina	90,000	Was over \$200,000	State Department of Education
Kansas	82,000		State Department of Education
West Virginia	76,369	FY94, -0- FY95 except carryover	State Department of Education
Maryland	75,722		State Department of Education
Iowa	74,000		Northeast Iowa Regional Library System
Connecticut	62,000		Adult Training & Development Network, Capitol Region Education Council
Nebraska	38,000		Dept of Voc & Adult Ed, Univ of Nebraska
Montana	37,842		
New Hampshire	35,370	Last budget; Center dissolved	Was part of Nashua Adult Learning Center
Minnesota	35,000		Part of Literacy Training Network, which has own budget
South Dakota	25,000		SD State Library, Department of Education
Delaware	25,000		DE Assn for Adult & Community Education
North Dakota	24,000		State Department of Education
Pennsylvania	0	Using leftover 94-95 \$	State Department of Education
Tennessee	0	For 1995-96	University of Tennessee
Vermont	0		VT State Dept of Education, VT Literacy Bd
Colorado		Don't know. It varies.	State Department of Education
North Carolina		N.R.	353 proj. of Training Inst. @ Appalachian St. Univ.
Florida		SLRC closed 7/95, no \$	Was part of Florida State University
	\$7,684,520		



of services the SLRCs provide to state and local groups.

As even a casual perusal of these tables will show, the SLRCs—at least in their current form—are in great peril. To put the bottom line first, without a substantial

and immediate federal initiative to save them and/or some bold new intervention by the states, most SLRCs will either die on the vine or become increasingly barren enterprises. Although there are some extraordinary exceptions (California and Illinois are examples), the

majority are already in an arrested state.

The dismal fact is that there has been no federal funding for SLRCs since their 1995 funding was rescinded. The National Institute for Literacy indicates that the best hope for restoration of funding is the Workforce Development Act now pending in Congress. But even if that Act passes, funds would not necessarily be earmarked for them and there is no certainty that they would get them.

Moreover, if some funding were to spring from that source, it would not be available until July 1997 at the earliest, more likely July 1998.

Even knowing that federal relief might be in the pipeline, how many can hold out another year or two? And, would the amount of future funding provided be adequate to sustain an effective range and level of service? In the few cases where SLRCs are on firmer financial ground, they may have a chance. But, for most, Tables P7 and P8a reveal that as things stand it is only a matter of time.

The best service is always provided closest

to home because needs vary substantially from community to community and state to state. Thus, the ideal response would be for the states to step in and save their own SLRCs. This probably is not likely.

The only feasible course, given the stark reality of the situation, may be for the federal government—perhaps in consultation with various stakeholders in the states—to reconceptualize the very structure of the SLRCs, at least those that are endangered. One option might be to transform those in peril into strategically placed regional centers around the country. Indeed, a few SLRCs are already part of such groups.

Moreover, an effort to structurally revamp the resource centers would provide an opportunity to rethink their fundamental role, something that their survival also appears to depend on. It could well be that in trying to do something for everyone—which many sections of this report show to be the case—the SLRCs are carrying too onerous a burden in any case.

<b>P10. Please check any of the following specific services that your SLRC provides to literacy planning, policy development, and funding groups in the state.</b> [SLRC, Q3 only]	
Q3 SLRC (40 of 40 responded, 100%)	
Lending library resources	93%
Professional staff development	90
Statewide conferencing	83
Evaluation, pgm dev, other tech assistance	75
Policy development & planning	70
State advocacy	66
Data collection & analysis	65
National advocacy	55
Other	25
<b>P11. Please check any of the following services that the SLRC provides directly to local literacy programs (regardless of their institutional base).</b> [SLRC, Q3 only]	
Q3 SLRC (40 of 40 responded, 100%)	
Professional staff development	90%
Lending library resources	90
Statewide conferencing	80
Public awareness	78
Curriculum development	75
Program development	73
Evaluation/assessment	68
Data collection & analysis	65
State advocacy	63
Policy development & planning	63
Training tutors or tutor trainers	60
National advocacy	53
Applying research to practice	55
Fundraising/resource development	53
Grant funds	45
Other	18

In their enabling legislation SLRCs were thought of —like the National Institute for Literacy—as overarching entities that were not primarily educational in nature and organization but that should include education, labor, human resource and development, and other kinds of entities as equal partners.

The basic philosophy was that literacy is not only an educational problem; it cuts across the legitimate interests and programs of many social and economic domains.

But, as Table P9 shows, not many SLRCs have been implemented according to this ideal, and the holder of the purse usually dictates the expenditure and its

purpose. Of the 40 taking part in the study, half are controlled by state education departments (i.e. located *within* them). The others are scattered within library systems (5), colleges and universities (8), and other organizations. One (in Louisiana) is under the direct jurisdiction of a governor’s office. Only two or three are free-standing entities with independent leadership.

Thus, it is not surprising to learn (in P8 and P9) that, for the most part, the SLRCs do not operate as their states’ lead coordinating and planning agencies at all.

This certainly does not mean that they never provide any leadership or that they do not have

active voices in important statewide forums. On the contrary, Tables P10 and P11 indicate that they provide a wide range of highly substantive analytic, resource development, and technical assistance services—to other literacy planning and policy groups and to a wide array of local literacy programs. (It is interesting to note the extent to which they are also a source of fundraising help to local programs.)

What is incredible is how *much* they have been doing—despite having been poorly implemented ...or politically beaten back...or financially starved...or sometimes all three.

Nevertheless, what all this comes down to is that,

in most cases, loss of the SLRC function would clearly deprive state libraries, library literacy programs, and everyone else (including community-based organizations and voluntary programs) of a vital resource at a time when it is most needed.

One of the main things this study sought to clarify was whether the SLRCs can be counted on as a continuing resource. The answer is unknown. Thoughtful intervention would have to take place quickly. The challenge is not easy, but if enough people in the right positions care enough, it could be met.

Perhaps SLRCs (state or regional) should concentrate on analyzing the policies and procedures of the different departments of their state(s) that have relevance to literacy, informing state legislatures about the impact of policies, and recommending new ways to make the literacy instructional and support systems more efficient and effective. They could become the data collection hubs for their jurisdictions and develop systems for communicating the information to all interested populations. They could advocate for collaboration, working with all appropriate groups, government and private, to identify gaps in services and facilitate planning to meet the changing needs. Unless there were no other resources, they would not provide direct services to providers. (Helen Crouch, LVA)

## 4: FINANCES & FUNDING

As another measure of leadership, capacity, and substantive engagement, this section takes up a variety of financial and funding questions. Two main lines of inquiry are the issue of dependency on federal funding and the likely impact of state block grant funding on public library involvement in adult literacy.

### STATE LIBRARIES AS A SOURCE OF FUNDING

State library personnel were asked (in F1) if their agencies are now a source of literacy funding to regional and local public libraries in their systems. The responses of the two categories of respondents are in some conflict. Nearly three of every five librarians say no, while three of every five of library literacy people say yes. One can only speculate on how to account for the difference, because both groups would be expected to know the facts.

The essential finding is that **about half of the state libraries claim to have a funding role.** How substantial this

<b>F1. Does your state library agency currently provide adult literacy funding to the state's central and branch public library facilities?</b> [Q1-Q2]					
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		
Q1	State Librarians (34 responses of 35 possible)	44%	56%		
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (39 of 44)	62	38		
<b>F2. If federal funding for <u>library literacy programs</u> were substantially cut, which of the following do you think would occur?</b> [Q1-Q4]					
		<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
	Most library literacy programs would have to reduce their level of outreach/service.	80%	64%	58%	78%
	Most programs would be able to find replacement funding.	6	11	5	13
	Many programs would be unable to survive.	57	41	45	24
	Most programs would not be significantly affected.	11	16	3	18
	Other Impacts	3	7	0	21
	Would lose staff, volunteers				
	Many would survive only with difficulty				
	Program would be kept routine, little new				
	Strong collections will become outdated in 5-6 years				
	Less national advocacy, reduced state emphasis				
	More time would have to be spent fundraising				
<b>F2a. If federal funding for <u>adult literacy programming in general</u> were cut substantially, which of the following do you think would occur?</b> [Q3 only]					
				<u>SLRC</u>	
	Most programs would have to reduce service/outreach.			95%	
	Most programs would be able to find replacement funding.			3	
	Many programs would be unable to survive.			59	
	Most programs would not be significant affected.			3	
	Other impacts			10	
	Reduced emphasis on program quality				
	Some CBOs would cease to exist or to offer literacy instruction.				

funding role is is another matter. A comparison of the F1 responses with those given earlier in Table R3 of Section 1

provides some further insight. When asked if the development of library-

based adult literacy programs was presently a major mission of their state agency, half of the Q1 and Q2 respondees

said yes. So it would seem that **most state libraries that consider adult literacy services to be a major part of their mission also back it up with at least some money.**

Moreover, analysis of raw material in the background data book reveals a very interesting fact. Note that the operative word in the question about role was “major.” So “no” answers to that question do not necessarily mean those agencies do not work in literacy at all, or that they do not perceive it to be a legitimate activity. (It only means that adult literacy is a relatively low priority in their scheme of things and thus probably more vulnerable in economically troubled times.)

Deeper analysis of data book material reinforces this point. Respondents from groups Q1 and Q2 said that state libraries in 26 states consider the development of library literacy programs a major part of their mission; only 7 of those states did not appear on the F1 list as sources of literacy funding (ID, LA, MA, NH, NV, RI, and VT). Similarly, 30 state agencies *are* named

<b>F3. Federal support for literacy will likely be provided through state block grants starting in the fall of 1996. How do you think this dramatic shift will affect your agency's capacity to provide leadership in library literacy (e.g. will it affect the level of funding available from your agency, will shared decision making among local libraries and your agency be increased or decreased)? [Q1, Q2]</b>			
		<u>% Responding</u>	<u>%N.R.</u>
Q1	State Librarians (33 of 35)	94%	6%
Q2	State Agency Literacy Contacts (37 of 44)	84	16
			<u># Mentions</u>
			<u>Q1</u> <u>Q2</u>
	Minimal or limited impact		4 7
	Probably none—we have strong literacy support from governor's office		3
	No impact		3
	Services for literacy will increase due to recent reorganization in state		1
	Services for literacy may increase somewhat because state library shares decision-making with state board of education		1
	Our state role and ability to provide library literacy funding may increase		1
	We have statutory state funding for adult and family literacy in public libraries		1
	If funds are not earmarked for library literacy, we'll lose substantially	2	2
	Loss of support will probably be significant	2	2
	Without federal funding, there will be no literacy dollars, no state-level capacity	1	1
	Literacy will become a lower priority at state/local levels		4
	Depends on funding priorities of state or governor	1	3
	Funds will go to the state education agency and libraries will lose out	1	1
	If funds go to state education agency, we will lose out/won't be able to complete	1	1
	If not earmarked for libraries, schools will get the money. Libraries, CBOs and community colleges will be fighting for the same reduced funds		1
	No leadership training could be provided & other core program services would have to be reduced		1
	Depends on what state agency/office controls the block grant funding		1
	Substantial losses if block grants are earmarked for workforce development	1	
	Funding will go to traditional ABE programs, not library literacy programs	1	
	More staff time and resources will be needed to compete for the resources	1	1
	We will have to reduce or eliminate ongoing program support	1	
	It all depends on the level of block grant funding	1	1
	We will continue to sponsor literacy workshops for librarians and to help librarians develop grants and take part in joint planning	1	
	Shared decision making among local and state libraries will decrease		1
	Decision making among locals and state library will increase	1	1
	None—we have never been able to use federal literacy funding as it is because of other pressing needs	1	1
	We'll continue to do the best we can	1	
	Don't know	4	5

**F3a. Federal support for literacy will likely be provided through state block grants starting in the fall of 1996. How do you think this dramatic shift will affect the adult literacy situation in your state from the standpoint of funding, policy development and planning, and service provision? [Q3, Q4]**

		<u>% Responding</u>	<u>% N.R.</u>
Q3	SLRCs (37 of 40)	93%	7%
Q4	Local Programs (61 of 63)	97	3

	<u># Mentions</u>	
	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Will force major reduction of literacy services in the state; there'll be significantly less funding for literacy	5	6
Will eliminate libraries as literacy providers in the state, leave them out in the cold		4
Will eliminate literacy education in the state	1	1
Library groups won't be able to compete with education groups for the funding; we'll be shut out of the funding		7
We'll end up squabbling/competing/scrambling with one another for the state's funding crumbs	1	3
Will not be able to compete for funding without set asides	2	3
Diminished funding for literacy will be further reduced by state program administrative costs, not currently the case with the federal distribution of LSCA		1
Voluntary programs in the state are nearly at a standstill already due to lack of funding and would virtually cease		1
Will be able to compete for funding only if we can become more involved with our state legislators		1
Will be able to access funding only through job and crime prevention programs		1
Will force more collaboration/networking	6	1
Collaboration and communication will be more difficult as we struggle to provide services with less funding		2
Fund distribution may not be made fairly and program favoritism could prevail; state may lack resources to disperse or disperse effectively to local literacy groups	1	3
It all depends on who makes the rules/which agency administers the funds	1	4
It will depend on the governor/governor's office/state politics	5	3
If SDE is in control, there'll be a decrease in services/programs for lowest-skilled individuals, voluntary programs, and the like		5
If SDE is in control there may be new growth opportunities	1	
Policy will be directed by governor's office which will strengthen our position and possibly lead to an increase in funding for adult basic skills services	1	
Will result in service emphasis on more highly-skilled individuals and systems with powerful voices—e.g. ABE, community colleges, schools, job training systems. Voluntary and programs serving lowest skilled individuals will lose out	5	7

in F1, including 12 not included in R3 (AK, AR, CA, CO, CT, MD, MS, NJ, NM, SC, and UT). On balance, then, **a significant number of state library agencies that do not consider literacy programs a major part of their mission nevertheless provide some funding for literacy activities.**

In other words, although 60% of all 44 state libraries participating in the study say that literacy is a major part of their agencies' mission, significantly more, nearly 70%, apparently provide *some* funding for literacy.

Unfortunately, the next section of this report will show that this funding role does not, with a few extraordinary exceptions, add up to a lot in terms of the actual dollar level of the support.

Moreover, as will be seen later, the federal government has been the source of much of the state library literacy funding—but earmarked federal funds for library literacy have all but disappeared at this writing. This fact has obvious repercussions for the literacy leadership capacity of state libraries, to say nothing of literacy

*Table F3a, cont'd*

If workforce development remains/becomes a priority in our state, general adult education services will be reduced/further reduced/defunded	4	8
If emphasis is on getting people off welfare and into work programs that serve lowest-level students will lose funding because they won't be able to meet "hours of participation" funding criteria	1	1
Rural/smaller/innovative programs will lose out to urban programs and more powerful voices—which happened in Indiana when Even Start money shifted from the federal to the state level		3
Stronger agencies/larger programs will survive; those less "evolved" won't		3
SDE emphasis will stay the same, but dollars will be fewer	1	
More adults will turn to libraries and volunteer groups for services		1
May force the state to more clearly define its literacy mission	1	
In this state we'll probably do okay		1
It will be easier to get supplemental funding		1
No impact		1
Don't know or not sure	8	5
We aren't involved in funding, policy development, & planning	1	
No response	1	2

services at the community level.

### **THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL CUTS**

In F2, the vast majority of respondees in all four groups think that **substantial cuts in federal funding for literacy will force most library literacy programs to reduce their level of outreach and service:** 80% of state librarians think so, as do 64% of library agency literacy contacts, 58% of SLRC heads, and 78% of the local programs.

A very high percentage of each group also think that **many programs would**

**be unable to survive:** 57% of state librarians, 41% of library agency literacy contacts, and 45% of SLRCs. Least pessimistic about the prospect of total collapse are the local programs; only one in four of them predict this.

Correspondingly, very few respondees in any of the groups think replacement funding could be found.

[Note that as bad as things could get for public libraries trying to offer literacy services, SLRCs say in F2a that substantial further erosion of federal funding would

have even worse consequences for adult literacy generally.]

Unthinkable as this scenario is, analysis of the background data book and of some of the tables in Section 7 of this report indicate that these predictions are not far off.

According to state library agency literacy experts, LSCA Title VI accounts for about 43% of all library literacy funding. LSCA Title I accounts for another 15%, and an additional 8% comes from other federal sources. Furthermore, the local public library partici-

pants themselves say that federal sources (largely LSCA) account for the lion's share of their funding, nearly 40% of it.

### **THE TROUBLE WITH BLOCK GRANTS**

Of course, for libraries the big issue is not the disappearance of Title VI of LSCA per se (now scheduled to occur after one last round of grants this fall). It is whether the federal funding that library agencies and library literacy programs have been getting for several years now would still come to them if it is shifted to state block grants.

Thus, questions F3, F3a, and F4 asked the four study groups how, if at all, block grant funding would affect them, their organizations, and adult literacy services in their states.

A few but not many of the respondees believe that a federal shift of funds to state block grants will have little or no impact on them. Overwhelmingly, they are convinced that **if block grant funds are not earmarked for library literacy services, libraries will lose out.**

The reasons are many and varied: In some

**F4. Some library literacy personnel are worried that the block grant approach will place libraries at a disadvantage in competing for available state education/literacy funds. What difficulties will you, your organizations, or others involved in the provision of library literacy services face if the majority of literacy funding does come in block grant form? [Q1-Q4]**

		<u>% Responding</u>	<u>% N.R.</u>
Q1	State Librarians (32 of 35)	91%	9%
Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts (35 of 44)	80	20
Q3	SLRCs (33 of 40)	83	17
Q4	Local Programs (55 of 63)	87	13

	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Depends on what state agency/office controls the funds	1	2	1	1
We/voluntary programs/CBOs already have trouble getting funded because library-based literacy programs are not an SDE/education priority	2	3		1
State library would lose out (or continue to lose out) to state education department/agency	2	3	2	1
Schools will be the priority/and the rest of us will be pitted against each other	1	2		2
If funds go to SDE, we won't get any/or won't be able to compete with ABE	1	1		3
Traditional providers will keep all the money; the whole literacy community is threatened, not just libraries				1
Unless funds are earmarked for state library/library literacy, we won't get any/much of it	1	2	1	9
If funds not given directly to state library, we'll have great trouble getting it	2			
Unless governor/SDE are convinced that libraries have an education role they will do poorly/lose out in the funding competition		2	2	1
Depends on whether the governor has a personal interest/commitment	1	1	1	
If workforce/employment programs are given funding priority it will be at the expense of other programs	1	1	1	4
If adult education is retained as a separate funding track, and doesn't have to compete with vocational education, we should be okay				1
Other education programs, not library programs, will get the funding				1
Library-literacy programs will be given low/lower priority	1	2	1	
Programs that serve lowest-skilled adults (library, voluntary, CBO) will lose out				2
Libraries will have trouble competing with direct service providers	2			
Libraries will have trouble competing because they have no strategic plan			2	
Libraries may/will be pushed out of the funding loop		1	1	1
Very intense competition for the funds with libraries (and voluntary programs, and CBOs) losing	1	1		1
Libraries in many states will not get funded and will lose their incentive to be an integral part of the literacy movement	1			
Staffs will be reduce, in turn increasing administrative and managerial burdens and reducing services			1	4

cases, they think that governors won't care enough. In many cases, they believe that state education agencies will automatically be the fund administrators, and they fear that these agencies won't (many don't now) understand or welcome the library's education role.

[Note: In the essay answers to many of the

questions in this study there is an unmistakable undercurrent of mistrust on the part of libraries toward state education departments.]

Many of the respondents are also concerned that workforce training will be emphasized at the expense of other kinds of programs (especially those of voluntary groups, CBOs, and libraries—organiza-

The endemic fragmentation of adult education efforts is particularly serious for library literacy programs. They rightly have the impression that they may dry up and blow away if federal categorical support (and the state policies it directly or indirectly drives) goes away. Overall, they are caught in a double bind. Support is waning for both the literacy movement and the library movement, but both need to be strengthened if library literacy programs are to survive. (Forrest Chisman, Southport Institute for Policy Analysis)

**Table F4 cont'd**

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Large fish will gobble up the food/we're so small we'd get creamed	2	2	1	3
In a primarily rural state, urban programs will have trouble competing				1
Six wolves in a pen and only food for 3			1	
There will be decreased funding, more competition and/or less collaboration/ we'll be scrambling or pitted against each other for less money			2	5
We won't have enough clout/resources to compete		2		2
Without better communication among agencies, there will be problems		1	2	
Unless our state library is committed to library literacy we will suffer				2
Our library-literacy program already operates with no funding				1
Libraries don't have much of a role in our state; it'll be easy to decrease their funding			1	
None that we don't have now—we're already underfunded				2
We don't apply for state education/literacy funds now				1
Poor collections for use by adult students will result		1		
Very problematic				2
Don't know/hard to tell/not sure	6	5	4	7
None	4	1	1	
Groups that have established strong partnerships with others in the community should do all right; those that have no partners are less likely to get funded	1			1
Minimal, won't have much affect	2	2	3	4
Won't have much affect on established programs or high-visibility programs	1			1
Service provision will be less fragmented as programs will have to consolidate			1	
Answer not applicable/clear	1	2	6	1



**F4a. What can national and state leadership organizations do to help you and other literacy/library groups in your state minimize or protect against anticipated problems from the block grant approach? [Q1-Q4]**

		<u>% Responding</u>	<u>% N.R.</u>
Q1	State Librarians (27 of 35)	77%	23%
Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts (31 of 44)	70	30
Q3	SLRCs (33 of 40)	83	17
Q4	Local Programs(56 of 63)	89	11

	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
National groups can provide information and statistical data	1	1	1	
Document and provide information about programs and their achievements to legislators	1	1	1	2
Providing timely information about the changes would help		1		
Issue position statements on the use of funds, models of service/propose standards		2	1	
Develop information pieces for state education agencies, human resource groups, and other state entities which may get block grants to show the value of library-literacy programs. Distribute this through state libraries and ask them to take an active communications role.		1		
Provide every governor with print information on role and importance of library literacy programs. Follow up with personal phone calls		1		
Promote collaboration/coordination/consolidation of activities	3	3	7	5
Provide policy development and planning assistance/be a partner in such activities			3	
Encourage each state to develop a comprehensive statewide development plan which explicitly includes literacy/urge or require each state to allocate a percentage of its funding for literacy and for voluntary/library programs			1	3
Help get the message out that programs serving low-skilled adults (library-literacy programs, CBOs, voluntary programs) and ESL programs provide a vital service not offered in traditional ABE, workforce, or job training programs/show importance of social values as well as economic				12
Publicize the negative national impact if low-level adult readers were suddenly denied library-literacy services (perhaps in a television campaign)				2
Education departments should be required to include nontraditional and non-classroom-based programs in their thinking and funding		1		1
Help incorporate technology more into service delivery			1	
Make it clear that literacy is a national and state priority			1	1
Help dispel the concept of the “quick fix”			1	
Advocacy and public relations—directed especially to policymakers, governors, legislators	2	1		5
Conduct a major information blitz to state library directors stressing the importance and cost-effectiveness of library literacy programs				1

tions that serve the lowest-skilled adults). Along the same lines, they fear that schools and traditional ABE programs, both having more organized and powerful voices, will get preferential treatment—pushing things back to where they were before the adult literacy movement came along and leveled the playing field.

In short, there is a powerful sense, which appears to be based on experience, that **how well libraries do on the playing field of the future—indeed whether they are even able to get onto the field—will depend on who controls the funds and whether anything is earmarked for library literacy.**

Of course, the amount of financing is obviously a crucial matter, too. Increasingly, these groups see a situation of diminished funding in which lack of sensitive federal or state leadership will pit them against each other and everyone else.

“Six wolves in a pen and only food for three,” observes one respondent. “Large fish will gobble up the food,” say others. Or, “rural programs won’t be able to compete with

urban programs” or vice versa.

Clearly, the groups in the study understand as well as anyone the dangers they face. And some fully appreciate that the adult literacy movement as a whole is on or headed for a backward slide. It could be pushed *way* back into the shadows if the block grant movement goes forward without adequate, earmarked funding provided, and if explicit federal guidelines are not set down for state spending on both adult literacy and library literacy.

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### **HOW NATIONAL & STATE ORGANIZATIONS CAN HELP**

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In question F4a, groups Q1-Q4 were asked to think about how national and state-level groups might help them minimize or protect against problems resulting from the state block grant approach. The responses range all over the map. But the majority fall into several broad thematic areas:

There is a **heavy call for national and state leadership organizations**

**Table F4a, cont'd**

	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Awareness activities that educate policymakers on the relationships between adult illiteracy and welfare, unemployment, and crime			1	
Public awareness campaigns to promote/make evident what libraries can/do contribute to adult literacy service provision	1	1		2
Promote literacy at the National Governors' Conference	1	1		
Educate political leaders, funders, the National Governors' Association on the role of public libraries in adult literacy programming		1		2
Assure a process that gives all groups—regardless of size and outreach—an effective voice and equal access to funds			4	6
Mandate truly representative advisory groups and state interagency working groups to plan and coordinate policies			1	
Keep lines of communications open between diverse literacy and adult education providers		1	1	
Have SLRCs seek input/ involvement from all players through workshops				1
State/local organizations can work together to mesh overlapping/duplicative programs that are by themselves too expensive to run	1	1		2
Help local groups develop planning, fundraising and budgeting, and coalition-building skills	1			
Help state and local libraries develop better marketing strategies	1			
Encourage, develop, demonstrate meaningful systems of accountability			2	1
Consultants could travel to the states to give workshops and seminars	1	1		
Convene a national library literacy forum with involvement of the ALA, the US Department of Education, and other national groups		1		
Provide forums for discussion and information				1
Legislation should set aside a specific percentage of adult education funds for literacy/library-literacy programs	3	1	1	
Libraries should be included as potential recipients in set-aside funding for literacy services below GED level		1		
Push for block grants to be awarded for literacy through LSCA/LSTA legislation	1			
Ensure set-asides for library literacy programs			1	8
Make sure that adult education and vocational education funding are kept separate				1
Ensure that a percentage of literacy funding goes directly to the state library agencies/public libraries	2	2		3
Push for percentage of block grants to be earmarked for adult literacy/basic education	1	1	3	3
Insist that adult literacy funds be administered by state education agencies				1

*Table F4a, cont'd*

	<u>Q1</u>	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Make sure that local programs are not held to improper/impossible standards and thus cut out of the funding				3
It's a question of politics in our state, which state agencies are in control and the literacy interests/commitment of elected officials	1			
Recognize public libraries as players, in legislation and other ways	1	1		1
Ensure that library leaders have an equal say in planning and funding decisions/encourage state library agencies to participate in administration of block grant funds	1	1		1
Encourage state-level groups to permit local literacy programs to determine their own program orientation based on their assessment of local need, rather than to be forced into, say, a workforce mode getting state emphasis				2
Make sure that block-grant funds are equitably distributed based on need				5
Lobby for adequate/increased funding	1	1	1	1
Require a higher level of support than is the case now			1	
Revise legislation to guarantee longer-term funding				2
Continued lobbying by all individuals and organizations		1		
Professional organizations should do more to bring about funding increases based on demonstrated need			1	
Block/don't implement the block grant movement/literacy funding should be kept at federal level		1		2
Reduce conflicting provisions in public law			1	
Eliminate expensive bureaucratic requirements				1
Develop a sound plan			1	
It depends on the interest/commitment of the governor			1	
Provide more state funding, less national funding	1			
Keep an open mind—it may be an opportunity			1	1
National groups can't help; it's a state-based problem; it's a matter of our own understanding/commitment; we have to be organized at the local level	1	2	1	1
Don't know/not sure	6	2	2	5
None	2			
Not applicable		1		
Answer unclear			1	

**to provide more and better information about adult illiteracy and to undertake awareness activities that promote illiteracy as a continuing national priority.**

There are numerous calls for evaluating, documenting, and getting the word out about successful programs. Many respondents feel that the role of public libraries should be more widely publicized. And many, especially local library literacy programs, want help to show that programs serving low-skilled adults (libraries, CBOs, voluntary groups) are performing a unique and vital service.

Among the most important targets for these activities are governors and the National Governors' Association, state and national legislators and other political leaders, state education agencies, and public libraries themselves.

Various kinds of hands-on technical assistance is also called for—with both local and state groups seen as benefitting from it. The leadership sources indicated are SLRCs, national organizations, and nationally-supplied consultants who could

**F5. Please give your state's FY95 funding for all adult literacy programs—including workforce, family, ESL, ABE, voluntary—or give the amount for the latest year available and specify the year. [Q3 only]**

**F5a. Indicate the percentage of state adult literacy funding that goes to library literacy programs. [Q3 only]**

**F6. As a percentage of the total state budget, in the past 5 years has state funding of adult literacy increased, decreased, or stayed about the same? [Q3 only]**

**F6a. In dollar amount of support, in the past 5 years has state funding of adult literacy increased, decreased, or stayed about the same? [Q3 only]**

	F5 Total Est. State Literacy Funding		F5a Library Literacy \$ as % Of F5	State's Adult Literacy Funding In Past 5 Years									
	Year			F6 As % of Total State Budget				F6a In \$ Amount Of Support					
				(+)	(-)	Same	D.K.	(+)	(-)	Same	D.K.		
AL	4,000,000	FY95	5	1					1				
AK	3,000,000	FY95	?				1					1	
AZ	3,000,000	FY96	N.R.				1					1	
CA	D.K.		D.K.										
CO	D.K.		D.K.				1					1	
CT	23,000,000	FY95	1				1			1			
DE	D.K.		D.K.			1					1		
FL	N.R.		N.R.						N.R.				N.R.
HI	N.R.		N.R.				1					1	
IA	1,759,000	FY95	3				1					1	
IL	25,000,000	FY95	20				1			1			
IN	1,500,000		10			0.5	0.5			1			
KS	1,000,000	FY95	20	1						1			
KY	N.R.		N.R.	1						1			
LA	D.K.		D.K.			1					1		
MD	N.R.		N.R.				1					1	
MI	D.K.		D.K.				1					1	
MN	18,000,000	FY94-95	D.K.			1					1		
MO	N.R.		N.R.	1						1			
MS	8,000,000	FY95-96	D.K.	1						1			
MT	D.K.		D.K.				1						1
NC	29,000,000	FY94	0					1					1
ND	1,500,000	FY94-95	0				1					1	
NE	D.K.		D.K.				1					1	
NH	1,800,000	FY95	0				1					1	
NJ	D.K.		D.K.					1					1
NM	4,570,000	FY95	10			1						1	
NY	D.K.		D.K.	1						1			
OH	N.R.		N.R.					1					1
OK	500,000	FY95	N.R.						N.R.				N.R.
PA	20,102,231	FY95	2				1					1	
SC	N.R.		N.R.	1						1			
SD	800,000	FY95	0				1					1	
TN	N.R.		0	1						1			
UT	7,134,000	FY95/96	0				1			1			
VT	N.R.	FY95-96	N.R.			1					1		
VA	850,000	D.K.				1							N.R.
WA	18,000,000	FY95	1	1						1			
WV	2,013,827	FY95	1	1						1			
WI	N.R.	D.K.					1					1	

Note: The SLRCs in IA and SD indicate that the source of information is their SDE. NE indicates no access to the information but believes there is no state funding. SC said that the state contribution is 3 times the federal. State funding information in this table is relatively useless and probably represents a good deal of guessing. Little can be concluded except that most SLRCs do not appear to have direct access to information about their states' literacy finances and funding.

**F7. What % of FY95 literacy funding in the state (or use most recent year) comes from the sources listed below? [Q3]**

Key: <b>1</b>	Title I of LSCA	<b>8</b>	Non-ABE state sources
<b>2</b>	Title VI of LSCA	<b>9</b>	Municipal
<b>3</b>	ABE State Grant Program	<b>10</b>	Corporate
<b>4</b>	Workplace Literacy Grants, DAEL, USDE	<b>11</b>	Foundation grants
<b>5</b>	Other USDE	<b>12</b>	Individual donations
<b>6</b>	U.S. Dept. of Labor	<b>13</b>	Other (specify)
<b>7</b>	Other federal		

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
AL			x					x					
AK			60			10		10					10
AZ		10	70	10							5	5	
CA	D.K.												
CO	D.K.												
CT			15		5	3		40	37				
DE	N.A.												
FL	N.R.												
HI		27			36								
IA	D.K.												
IL		1	25	5				60			8		
IN		30	30	10		5					5		20
KS								100					
KY	1	1	18	1		8	1	46	1	0.5	0.5	2	20
LA	N.R.												
MD	N.R.												
MI			8										
MN	0.5	0.5	15	1		7		55		4	2		15
MO	D.K.												
MS	1												
MT	D.K.												
NC	N.R.												
ND			50			5		30					10
NE	N.R.												
NH		5	70					25					
NJ	N.R.												
NM		10	60		20	2				3	5		
NY	N.R.												
OH	D.K.												
OK	N.R.												
PA			60		5			35					
SC			23		6	0.1	0.7	70					
SD	1		95		3							1	
TN	N.R.												
UT	1	1	24	8	2			64					
VT	1	1	40	17	38								3
VA	D.K.												
WA			20			10	10	60	1	1	1	1	
WV			33			67							
WI	N.R.												

Note: Little can be concluded from this table other than that in the judgment of SLRCs the principal source of funding in states for adult literacy (not library literacy programs!) is federal/state ABE grants. Among the non-ABE state sources specified were General Revenue (IL) and state appropriations generally (KS, ND). Even Start funding was cited in several of the Category 5 responses. JTPA and JOBS were cited in a number of instances. The National Guard provides significant funding in AK. Contractual arrangements produce some income (14%) in ND. VISTA, the state literacy board (VT), and a statewide foundation (IN) are cited as important current or future sources.

travel the states giving workshops and seminars. The respondents would also like to have help with policy and planning, developing accountability procedures, incorporating technology into service delivery, fundraising, budgeting, coalition-building, marketing, and other areas of perceived need.

Not unexpectedly, there are also strong calls for leadership groups to ensure that block grants include literacy set-asides for libraries, and that processes are protected or adopted to assure equitable distribution of funding.

It isn't hard to see that action on all of these

fronts would be helpful to state and local library-literacy groups, and to general literacy groups as well. Indeed, most of them are activities that have been needed all along—and that have been *given* all along, but in varying degree depending on the political and economic winds.

However, while it is a plus that the respondents recognize the form that most practical help can take, more movement on any of these fronts, while desirable, would not produce results overnight.

**More urgently needed in the present economic and ideological climate is something new, something with potential for an immediate impact.**

The thinking is thin and lacking in innovation from this standpoint. But there are a few promising ideas. Here are three of the best:

◆ Professional organizations should do more to bring about funding increases based on demonstrated need.

◆ A national library literacy forum should be convened, with involvement of the American Library Association, the U.S. Department of Education, and other national groups.

◆ To show the value of library-literacy programs, information pieces should be developed specifically for state education agencies, human resource groups, and other state entities which may receive block grants. The material should be distributed through state libraries with state libraries asked to take an active communications role.

matters from the statewide perspective of the SLRCs: the amount of FY95 state funding for adult literacy, the change in level of that funding over the past five years, and the percent of this funding that has gone to library literacy programs. [Note: The issue of state funding for library literacy purposes is taken up again in Section 5.]

Unfortunately, because of the erroneous assumption that SLRCs had been implemented as the widely representative bodies conceived in the National Literacy Act, the survey questions, as it turned out, were somewhat pointless.

With few exceptions, the state funding information in F5-F7 is relatively useless and probably represents a great amount of guessing. Little can be concluded from it other than that the SLRCS are poorly informed about state literacy funding matters and even more so about library literacy funding.

The tables are further evidence, if more be needed, that most SLRCS are out of the loop and function as dependent offices within other organizations.

**F8. Does the SLRC currently have a major role in directing or facilitating the flow of adult literacy funding to the state's local literacy programs, including those based in libraries? If yes, what form does this role take and with what other key groups is the responsibility shared.** [Q3 only]

	Yes	No	Don't Know
SLRCs (40 of 40)	15%	83%	2%

States answering yes: Alaska, Illinois, Michigan, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota

Groups with which shared:

- Advisory through ABE Interagency Committee (AK) Secretary of State's Literacy Office because that office operates the SLRC (IL)
- The Library of Michigan Foundation's *Read Indeed* program, which we fund (MI)
- We administer several grants; our staff reviews local project proposals and recommends funding (SC)
- The State Library, ABE, and SD Literacy Council (SD)

**USELESSNESS OF SLRC FUNDING DATA**

The next five questions in this section (F5, F5a, F6, F6a, F7) were directed solely to the SLRCs. They were designed to shed light on three related

One thing that surprised me was how out of the loop SLRCs seemed to be. I think this reflects the fact that they were originally funded as governor's grants, and so ended up going to very different places in each state. (Virginia Heinrich, MN)

However, even if the questions had been directed to state departments of education, it is doubtful that the figures would be completely sound because the SDEs are just one of many state agencies that presumably make expenditures on adult literacy—including human resource, labor, and departments of justice. And no one at the state or national level has ever done a thorough and consistent job of drawing together funding information from such disparate jurisdictions.

Despite the general uselessness of the tables, however, they do raise some intriguing issues. Is it possible, for instance, that adult literacy funding in so many states has stayed the same over the past five years despite continual budget cutting at the state level? Or have most states never really allocated very much to adult literacy? Numerous

indicators in this study point to the latter.

Also of interest, it was noted earlier that SLRCs are less aware of libraries as a component of the statewide literacy providing system than they should be. This is shown again in F5a—hardly anyone ventures a guess on the library's share.

Finally, the last question in this section (F8) provides another measure of just how removed from the center of power and authority the SLRCs are. All 40 of the participating SLRCs answered the question, yet only 6 of them (AK, IL, MI, ND, SC, SD) said at the time of questioning that they had a major role in the actual *funding* of local literacy programs.

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### **ONE OVERRIDING CONCERN**

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In the design of this study, a conscious decision

was made to avoid explicit references to the level of funding as a problem. The intent was to let the matter surface naturally as an issue, if indeed it was one.

In fact, strong evidence of a major funding problem began to accumulate at the outset of this report. This discussion of finances and funding only adds further urgency to the matter: The lack of funding—and of stability in funding—is an alarming problem on the verge of becoming a crisis. This issue, more than any other, is of overriding concern.

## 5: LIBRARY AGENCY PROGRAM DATA

Data collection issues are the primary concern in this strand of the study. To what extent do state library agencies collect data about local public library involvement in adult literacy service provision? Is the data substantial enough to give a meaningful current picture of the nature, degree, and financing of that involvement. Only library agency literacy professionals (Q2) were questioned.

The section also provides an estimate of the number of public libraries offering adult literacy services.

In retrospect, expectations about the range and depth of information that could be provided were unrealistically high. Questions asked not only for numbers of local programs involved in specific substantive aspects of literacy service provision but also for those numbers according to different population service areas.

In the hope of compiling comparable data, the population groupings

**LAPD 1. Does your state library agency collect data on the library-based literacy programs in your state? (If yes, please give your best estimates to questions 2-4. If no, skip to question 5.)** [Q2 only]

State Library Literacy Contacts (39 of 44 responded, 89%)

1		2	3
% (#) Responding		# Giving	# Giving Data
Yes	No	Some Data	In NCES Format
33% (13)	67% (26)	14	13

- 1: CA, FL, GA, IL, IN, LA, MA, MO, ND, NH, SD, TX, WA  
 2: AK, AR, CA, CO, DE, FL, GA, MA, ND, NH, OK, SD, TX, WA  
 3: All states included in 2, except CO

specified were basically those used by the National Center for Educational Statistics in tracking and reporting on library activities generally. Respondees were asked to report according to 11 different population services areas, ranging from a population base of a million or more people down to units of 1,000 or less.

### A CRYING NEED FOR DATA COLLECTION

Occasionally, earlier sections of this report have delivered very mixed messages and sometimes deeply discouraging news. But there is opportunity in nearly everything discussed and findings are emphasized that might provide a foundation on which to build.

However, the response to question LAPD 1 reveals that a central building block is missing: **the vast majority of state libraries do not collect data on local public library literacy activities.** Library literacy programming and planning is handicapped as a result.

Moreover, not only don't most state libraries collect data, but extensive telephone interviewing found that other likely sources don't collect it either, at least not in any systematic or regular way—not the Public Data Service of the American Library Association, or the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, or the

Your report screams out for better data collection and dissemination, and for getting information on promising practices (and failed approaches) out to the field in a timely way—on a national basis. (Helen Crouch, LVA)



**LAPD 2.** *How many local public libraries and library branches in your state offered adult literacy services ap. 5 years ago and how many do today? If you do not have 1995 figures, please give the latest available and indicate the year.*

**LAPD 3.** *Of those libraries offering services in 1995, how many in each population group have the following characteristics?*

- 1 - # with an all-volunteer staff
- 2 - # with some paid staff
- 3 - # providing book collections for adult beginning readers
- 4 - # providing learning materials for students and/or tutors
- 5 - # providing space for classes and meetings
- 6 - # providing information and referral services
- 7 - # providing direct tutor training and/or student instruction using library staff
- 8 - # using computer technology for literacy program management purposes

**LAPD 4.** *Of those programs that provide direct tutor training and/or instruction using library staff, how many have the following characteristics?*

- a - # with an ESL component
- b - # with a family literacy component (instruction focused on parents)
- c - # with a workforce/workplace component
- d - # with off-site instruction (e.g. in prisons, worksites, schools)
- e - # that collaborate with outside groups for instructional purposes  
(e.g. voluntary organizations, community colleges, public agencies)
- f - # using computer technology for instruction/training purposes
- g - # using television or video technology for instruction/training purposes

**CALIFORNIA** (reported in terms of library jurisdictions)

LAPD 2	5 years ago	In 1995	
In areas of over 1,000,000	4	6	[Note: Some population areas have increased and thus been recategorized in 1995.]
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	7	6	
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	7	8	
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	22	23	
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	18	30	
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	13	18	
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	8	14	
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	1	0	
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	0	0	
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	0	0	
In areas of less than 1,000	0	0	
Totals	81	105	

LAPD 3:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
In areas of over 1,000,000	0	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	0	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	0	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	1	22	23	23	23	23	22	22
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	3	27	30	30	30	30	27	27
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	3	15	18	18	18	18	15	15
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	3	11	14	14	14	14	11	11
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of less than 1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

National Center for Education Statistics, or any number of other national or state-level groups one might consider.

In fact, the last time anything resembling comprehensive, system-wide data was collected was in the 1990 effort of the Public Library Data Service to inform the 1991 White House Conference on Libraries and Information Science. But that data reflected only what 583 Data Service members volunteered to report about the kinds of literacy activities they were engaged in.

**USING OLD DATA TO DERIVE CURRENT NUMBERS**

The best that can be done to estimate current numbers is to fall back on a study contracted more than a decade ago by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education.

That study was conducted by a team of researchers from the University of Wisconsin—Douglas Zweizig, Jane Robbins, and Debra Wilcox Johnson. As one component of a larger study, the group surveyed

a national sampling of public libraries to determine, among other things, how many were involved in adult literacy and the extent of that involvement judged by the number and type of literacy activities in which they were engaged.

Their May 1988 report—*Libraries and Literacy Education: Comprehensive Survey Report*—indicated that of the 8,561 public libraries then in existence, some 19% were “moderately” involved, while 4% were found to have a high level of involvement.

This translates into some 1,969 public libraries (23%) then involved substantially in adult literacy service provision. In other words, about one-quarter of all public libraries had a *major* adult literacy involvement eight to ten years ago.

Moreover, another 64% were “minimally” involved in adult literacy (only 13% were not involved at all), translating into an additional 5,479 libraries having *some* involvement.

The number of public libraries in existence has grown since 1988. According to the National

**Tables LAPD 2-4, cont'd**

**California, cont'd**

LAPD 4:	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
In areas of over 1,000,000	1	5	1	6	6	3	4
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	1	5	1	6	6	0	1
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	1	5	3	8	8	2	3
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	6	10	6	22	22	8	7
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	5	11	6	27	27	8	8
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	5	11	3	15	15	2	5
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	3	11	4	9	9	0	3
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of less than 1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**FLORIDA**

LAPD 2:	5 years ago	In 1995
In areas of over 1,000,000	65	65
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	80	84
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	69	69
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	91	90
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	41	42
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	26	28
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	19	19
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	10	10
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	4	4
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	0	0
In areas of less than 1,000	0	0
Totals	405	411

LAPD 3:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
In areas of over 1,000,000	0	65	65	65	65	65	65	65
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	0	84	84	84	84	84	31	70*
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	0	69	69	69	69	69	20*	60*
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	0	90	90	90	90	90	20*	79*
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	0	22	42	42	42	42	10*	15*
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	5*	16	28	28	28	28	8*	12*
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	10*	9	19	19	19	19	5*	8*
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	8*	2	10	8	10	10	2*	2*
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999								
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499								
In areas of less than 1,000								

\* approximate

LAPD 4:	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
In areas of over 1,000,000	65	35	65	30*	65	15*	0
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999							
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999							
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999							
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999							
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999							
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999							
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999							
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999							
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499							
In areas of less than 1,000							

\* approximate

[Note: We do not collect specific data to be able to respond accurately to this question. Level of service is far greater than guess-timates would indicate.]

**Tables LAPD 2-4, cont'd**

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

LAPD 2		5 years ago	In 1995
In areas of over 1,000,000	n.a.		
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	n.a.		
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	n.a.		
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	n.a.		
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999		0	1
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999		1	3
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999		2	7
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999		2	7
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999		1	10
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499		2	5
In areas of less than 1,000		0	1
Totals		8	33

LAPD 3:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
In areas of over 1,000,000	n.a.							
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	n.a.							
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	n.a.							
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	n.a.							
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999		1	1	1	1	1		
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999		2	1	3	3	3	1	1
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999		8	0	8	8	8	0	0
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999		6	1	7	7	7	1	1
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999		8	2	10	10	10	2	2
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499		4	1	5	5	5	0	1
In areas of less than 1,000		1	0	1	1	1	1	0

LAPD 4:	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
In areas of over 1,000,000	n.a.						
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	n.a.						
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	n.a.						
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	n.a.						
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999		1	0	0	0	1	1
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999		1	0	0	0	1	1
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	n.a.						
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999		1	0	0	0	1	1
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999		2	1	0	0	2	2
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	n.a.						
In areas of less than 1,000		0	1	0	0	1	0

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

LAPD 2:	5 years ago	In 1995
In areas of over 1,000,000	n.a.	n.a.
In areas of 500,000 to 999,999	n.a.	n.a.
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	n.a.	n.a.
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	n.a.	n.a.
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	2	2
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	2	2
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	6	6
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	4	4
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	1	1
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	1	1
In areas of less than 1,000	0	0
Totals	16	16

Center for Educational Statistics, there were 8,929 local public libraries in 1993—the latest year for which figures are available. They were spread throughout the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The ALA indicates that this number has not changed appreciably since 1993. Thus, the 1988 percentages applied now would mean that today some 2,054 public libraries have a major involvement in providing adult literacy services—assuming, of course, that the definition of “major” is about the same. Similarly, the number of public libraries having a low level of involvement, *but still some*, would be around 5,700.

In other words, public libraries are hardly a trivial part of the country’s adult literacy delivery system.

Obviously, the above estimates are based on a number of hypotheticals. But the order of magnitude suggested is probably reasonable. In fact, findings elsewhere in this study suggest that, if anything, the percentages of moderate to high involvement actually grew during much of the last decade (and began to decrease only recently).

**NO DATA ON  
BRANCH LIBRARIES**

Note that the activities of branch sites were not even included in the 1988 study and are thus not included here. But it is highly significant that more than 1,400 public libraries have branch operations, adding more than 7,000 community service venues. And it is common knowledge that many branches across the country are providing adult literacy services, some very extensively.

For instance, the New York Public Library is a single library system that actually serves the three huge boroughs of Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island. Its one adult literacy program—the Centers for Reading and Writing—is really eight different operations based in branch libraries scattered among the three boroughs. (Brooklyn and Queens are served by their own library systems.)

Each branch literacy site has its own staff and site director, its own book and materials collection, a computer center, its own pool of tutors, and other features. The makeup of the staff, tutors, and adult student body differs

*Tables LAPD 2-4, cont'd*

**South Dakota, cont'd**

LAPD 3:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
In areas of over 1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 500,000-999,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	2	0	2	2	2	2	0	0
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	2	0	2	2	1	2	0	0
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	6	0	6	6	4	6	0	0
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	4	0	4	4	4	4	0	0
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
In areas of less than 1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**TEXAS**

LAPD 2:	1990	In 1994
In areas of 1,000,000 or more	1	4
In areas of 500,000-999,999	3	1
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	3	3
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	13	16
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	12	12
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	32	27
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	45	45
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	44	37
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	25	15
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	11	2
In areas of less than 1,000	2	1
Totals	<u>182</u>	<u>163</u>

LAPD 3 (1994):	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
In areas of over 1,000,000	0	4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	4	n.a.
In areas of 500,000-999,999	0	1					1	
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	0	4					3	
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	0	20					16	
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	0	24					12	
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	0	46					27	
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	2	101					45	
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	2	108					37	
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	3	104					15	
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	4	63					2	
In areas of less than 1,000	1	13					1	

LAPD 4:	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
In areas of over 1,000,000	4	2	0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
In areas of 500,000-999,999	1	1	1				
In areas of 250,000 to 499,999	1	2	1				
In areas of 100,000 to 249,999	7	4	2				
In areas of 50,000 to 99,999	6	2	2				
In areas of 25,000 to 49,999	15	6	2				
In areas of 10,000 to 24,999	21	5	5				
In areas of 5,000 to 9,999	12	2	2				
In areas of 2,500 to 4,999	20	9	3				
In areas of 1,000 to 2,499	7	4	4				
In areas of less than 1,000	0	1	0				

**LAPD 5. What is the total amount of the State Library's FY95 funding for library literacy programs? [Q2 only]**

Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts	39 of 44 responded, 89%
Illinois	6,000,000	Agency is entire Secretary of State Literacy Office
California	3,466,000	FY year ended 6/96
New York	385,000	\$185,000 state grant; ap. \$200,000 LSCA
Texas	359,874	10 library systems disburse, ESL included
Indiana	341,831	
Kansas	277,000	
Hawaii	187,575	
Oklahoma	152,781	Plus SLRC @ ap. \$100,000
New Jersey	100,000	
New Mexico	70,000	From NM Coalition for Literacy budget of \$350,000
Tennessee	64,154	
Montana	61,000	\$35,000 LSCA Title VI; \$26,000 SLRC
Massachusetts	60,000	Do not provide direct funding apart from LSCA
Kentucky	39,130	
Arkansas	35,000	LSCA Title VI
Oregon	34,992	FY94 LSCA Title VI
Florida	25,000	
Missouri	18,257	
Michigan	17,381	
South Dakota	15,000	
Mississippi	10,116	
Ohio	5,400	Down from \$55,000 in 1991 and \$116,000 high in 1989
Delaware	4,147	
Pennsylvania	0	
West Virginia	0	
Virginia	0	
Vermont	0	
South Carolina	0	
New Hampshire	0	
Wyoming	0	
Louisiana	0	
Idaho	0	
Georgia	0	LSCA Title I funds only
Iowa	0	
North Dakota	0	
Nebraska	0	
Maine	0	
Alaska	0	
Colorado	?	Minimal. All federal grants

significantly from site to site depending on the economic and social make-up of the community in which the branch is located. And program problems and strengths differ because of variations in specific branch environment.

Administrative support, evaluation standards, funding, and other system-wide supports are provided from a ninth branch location under the direction of an overall program head who reports back to senior library administrative personnel.

As this example shows, it would be highly instructive to know about the literacy activities of the branch libraries, even though many would probably not exist in the absence of administrative support and direction from the main facilities.

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**MOST STATE LIBRARIES LACK DATA TO LEAD**

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Returning to the original issue, the LAPD 1 table shows that only 13 of the 39 state libraries responding said that they collect library literacy data. This means that the vast majority of state library agencies in the

country are not sufficiently armed with hard data to be able to work effectively with their local libraries on adult literacy programming—or to advocate convincingly in crucial state and national political and policy forums. It is difficult to see how the role of public libraries in adult literacy can be developed in earnest while this glaring data problem goes unattended.

Furthermore, analysis of material in the background data book shows that information provided by three of the respondents was so incomplete and superficial as to be of only marginal use. In fact, only nine of the library agencies responding with data collect really useful data—CA, FL, GA, MA, ND, NH, OK, SD, and TX—and even here, a few of the respondents said they had to make educated guesses or work very hard to adapt their data to the NCES format.

[Note: The Illinois State Library does an exemplary data collection job, but such extensive work would have been required to fit their data into NCES categories that it was mutually decided to proceed without it in the face of project deadlines

**LAPD 6. In the past 5 years has the State Library's adult literacy funding increased, decreased, or stayed about the same? [Q2 only]**

As % of Total Library Budget			In Dollar Amount Of Support		
Increase	Decrease	Same	Increase	Decrease	Same
5%	41%	54%	6%	36%	58%
(+) MO, OR			(+) IL, OR		
(-) AR, CO, FL, GA, IA, ID, IN, KS, MD, ME, MI, ND, NE, SC, VA			(-) CO, FL, GA, IA, ID, IN, KS, ME, MI, ND, OH, SC, VA		
(Same) AK, CA, DE, IL, KY, LA, MA, MS, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OK, PA, SD, TN, TX, VT, WA, WV			(Same) AK, AR, CA, DE, KY, LA, MA, MO, MS, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OK, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, VT, WA, WV		

**LAPD 7. If the State Library agency provides adult literacy funding to the central and branch libraries, what criteria are used to decide on the relative allocations? [Q2 only]**

AR	LSCA Title I - criteria for literacy subgrants for public libraries is the same as for any other LSCA Title I subgrant. LSCA Title VI - criteria for participation - (1) illiteracy rate, (2) geographic location in state, and (3) library cooperation with other established area literacy providers.
CA	Our funding is to the local library jurisdictions. They decide which branches to include.
CO	For LSCA , there is an RFP process. Although I have no say in final decision, I do [make recommendations].
DE	Grant process.
FL	We have never turned down a library's request for LSCA grant funds unless that library's request exceeded the 4-year limit that we currently use to fund any <u>one</u> project or unless the proposal was absolutely unsalvageable. We primarily look at the percentage of the total adult population that has not completed high school; number of adults who do not speak English well or at all; method of service delivery; education/training experience of project staff; costs of services proposed by specific budget category; quality of objectives and activities; evaluation plan; etc.
GA	It depends on the number of libraries submitting applications and the grant program area in which they apply.
IL	Our literacy funds are allocated on a community basis. If the library is the best agency to coordinate literacy efforts within a community or neighborhood they become the fiscal agent. They are involved as required partners in all projects. The Literacy Advisory Board has also determined that we should put large resources into communities whose residents are disproportionately represented in the two lower literacy levels—the Hispanic and African American populations.
IN	Program applications judged on merit.
KS	The need, program objectives, methods, evaluation, and future funding capabilities.

*Table LAPD 7, cont'd*

KY	One statewide program administers competitive subgrants.
MA	A competitive grant round is run every year in <u>all</u> LSCA projects which include literacy & ESL. This changes based on community need, interest, and ability to write and carryout a proposal. This is SEED money to begin new services; it cannot be used for ongoing expenses.
MI	LSCA competitive grant program.
MO	We have an LSCA competitive grants committee that makes the decisions on allocations of all LSCA funds.
MS	Is there a need? Will the dollars make a difference? Will impact justify the project? How will output be measured?
NJ	There are 3 programs: Literacy Instruction, Literacy Collection Development, and Family Literacy. Libraries can submit applications for any or all programs simultaneously. The money is distributed by rank scoring, regardless of program.
NM	The quality of their proposed projects in the universe of literacy program applicants (# of individuals likely to be assisted, use of volunteers, etc.).
NY	Awards based solely on grant applications.
OH	Monies are available through LSCA. We use a NOTICE OF INTENT process which allows the applicant to request what they need. In this next year we only have one library applying.
OK	They apply through a competitive grant process similar to the LSCA Title VI grant application (but easier). The highest scoring applications are funded.
OR	No allocation program. LSCA Title I competitive grants have evaluation criteria that must be highly scored.
PA	Dependent on applications submitted under a competitive grant process.
SC	Grant application.
SD	Financial need - "mini grant" requests.
TN	Competitive proposals for use of funds.
TX	The library systems determine the allocation of literacy funds to the member libraries based on plans of service.
WA	Funds are distributed purely on the quality of grant proposals submitted to the State Library. Any public library in the state can apply with any literacy idea.

and the meager overall response already evident at the time.]

Finally, although it is an issue of secondary importance, it is interesting to note that there is a weak correspondence between state libraries that accept adult literacy as a major part of their mission, those that provide some funding for literacy, and those that collect useful data for planning and information purposes.

For example, only 6 of the 18 state libraries reported by Q2 respondents to have adult literacy as a major mission collect data on library literacy programs. They report 24 as providing some funding for literacy, but only 10 collect data. Similarly, there is not a 1:1 correspondence in Table LAPD 1 between state libraries that say they collect data and state libraries that actually provided it to the project.

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**BUT SOME STATES  
ARE GOOD MODELS**

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Because so few state libraries collect information on local library literacy programming, the data that was provided is of limited use

for making national generalizations.

However, five of the better data sets (CA, FL, NH, SD, TX) are included here in LAPD 2 - LAPD 4 to illustrate that the kind of information the survey tried to collect would be an extraordinarily powerful planning and communications tool—if it existed on a widespread basis or could be created.

Moreover, in some respects the information they contain is highly suggestive. For example, it is clear that in some states adult literacy service levels have increased dramatically. This is valuable to know, despite the fact that other data, especially in LAPD 5-6, indicates that on an overall national basis public library literacy service has probably *decreased* in the last two to three years.

The salient point is that experience differs markedly from state to state. To be sure, the lack of regular national data collection is a serious problem, but at the same time it is important to keep in mind that some state libraries are doing an excellent job of it and are very strong models from

**LAPD 8. As best you can determine, what percentage of the state's 1995 funding for library literacy programs comes from the sources listed? [Q2 only]**

LSCA Title VI	43%
State sources	16
LSCA Title I	15
Other federal sources	8
Municipal sources	8
Foundation grants	4
Individual donations	3
Corporate grants	1
Other	3

which other states can learn.

These bright spots of library literacy programming and leadership need to be spotlighted at every opportunity and not buried in national averaging exercises.

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**PUBLIC LIBRARY INVOLVEMENT IS VARIED IN NATURE**

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The five data sets of LAPD 2-4 are also suggestive where the *nature* of current library involvement in adult literacy is concerned.

For the most part, local library literacy programs in the states shown are *known by the state agencies* to be involved in all forms of literacy service provision—from building and maintaining book and materials collections for tutors and adult new readers to providing space

for classes and meetings of outside groups...to providing information and referral services...to providing direct tutor training and student instructional services.

There is a heavy reliance on paid staff—volunteer tutors are nearly cost-free, but regular paid staff are needed for program administration, training, evaluation, and other program purposes.

In the larger states, direct instructional services are provided by a surprisingly high percentage of the local libraries. ESL services, family literacy, and workplace/workforce literacy are the focus of much of that instruction. Moreover, the literacy programs have a great deal of outreach, often taking instruction off-site to prisons, worksites, or schools.

Similarly, there is heavy use of computers for both program management and instructional purposes.

These patterns of involvement are state-specific, of course, but it so happens that they fit what local library literacy programs report about their own activities in Section 6. Furthermore, many of the activity involvements are quite consistent with those reported years ago in the OERI study. It would be interesting to know if patterns of involvement have shifted in emphasis over the years, but that is a subject for another study.

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**STATE AGENCY FUNDING FOR LOCAL LITERACY PROGRAMS IS SCANT**

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The remainder of this section has to do primarily with matters of library literacy funding.



State library literacy personnel were asked in LAPD 5 to indicate the total amount of their agency's FY95 funding for library literacy programs. As the table shows, the response is notably unremarkable.

Of the 39 agencies answering the question, only two state libraries (5%) provide truly substantial funding— Illinois and California— and both are states in which the libraries have a central leadership role and plenty of political support. Another seven agencies (20%) report six-figure funding levels.

But, on the basis of the evidence supplied, the vast majority of state libraries do not, at present, provide much funding

at all. Only 4 (10%) have five-figure grant budgets above \$50,000, 10 (26%) report even lower sums, and 16 (41%) provide nothing at all.

Is this poor showing a recent phenomenon—a side effect of shrinking state library budgets generally—or has it been the pattern all along?

Again, with only two or three exceptions, a comparison of LAPD 5 and LAPD 6 responses indicates that about 40% of the agencies have recently experienced significant reductions. Indiana and Kansas are among these, although Ohio's drop from \$116,000 in 1989 to \$5,400 in 1995 (a 95% loss!) is the most chilling. In most cases, however, it looks as if

state libraries now doing little or nothing never really did much.

Of course, a related and perhaps even more important issue is whether the funding that is being given has been coming from core library agency budgets—thus being relatively secure—or whether it is soft and transient in nature.

Tables LAPD 5 and LAPD 7-8 point once again to a dominant federal LSCA role. **These federal programs have been a major source of library literacy funding, Title VI alone accounting for some 43% of it in the estimation of the respondents.** [Note: OERI data indicate that of the 2,249 LSCA Title VI grants awarded between FY86-

FY95—amounting to \$57 million over the ten-year period—only 155 (6%) went directly to state libraries.]

Thus, much of what state library agencies have been doing in adult literacy—to say nothing of local library literacy programs themselves—is in grave danger of evaporating as a result of recent and expected federal cuts and/or unearmarked block grants. Very little appears to have been institutionalized.

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**STATE LIBRARIES GIVE PLENTY OF OTHER NEEDED HELP**

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Finally, it is essential to recognize that just because a state library is not directly providing significant or any direct funding to local public library literacy programs does not mean it provides no other important services to them, or that it is not involved in meaningful statewide planning and resource development.

Indeed, LAPD 9 shows that state library literacy personnel think their agencies play quite an important state and national advocacy role.

**LAPD 9. Please check any of the following services that your state library agency or the state's central/regional libraries provide for the benefit of local library literacy programs.** [Q2 only]

	State Library Agency	Central/Regional Library
State advocacy	81%	36%
National advocacy	53	22
Policy development & planning	50	22
Statewide or regional conferencing	53	19
Professional staff development	53	17
Evaluation, program development, or other technical assistance	53	17
Data collection & analysis	33	14
Other	25	0

They also provide policy development and planning services, conferences, and other technical assistance—all activities of benefit to local programs, and **all of which cost the state libraries substantial amounts of money.**

Moreover, there is no direct relationship between what a state library grants to local public library literacy programs, the overall operating revenue of those local programs, or how extensive a state's network of library literacy services and programs is.

State library agencies in Massachusetts and Florida, for example, provide next to no literacy funding, but those states have among the most extensive systems of statewide library literacy service in the nation.

And library agencies and personnel in those states are deeply involved in state planning, data collection, and the like. They also tend to be connected to national planning and development activities and to be recognized leaders in national circles.

## 6: LOCAL PROGRAMS : THE HEART OF THE MATTER

A key purpose of this study was to explore the current and potential leadership roles of state library agencies as a force for strengthening and developing the environment in which local library literacy programs function.

But the local adult literacy programs themselves are at the heart of the entire study—their service...their basic structures and philosophical orientation...the population groups they reach and the numbers of adults they serve...their operating circumstances...the problems and barriers they face in an increasingly unsupportive and hostile world...and the strengths and difficulties they experience, if any, specifically *because* they operate within a library culture. This section of the report looks at these issues.

The programs that took part in the study are not, in a statistical sense, representative of public library literacy programs because the sample (63) is too small for drawing valid national conclusions. But because

of the criteria by which they were chosen for participation—nominated or selected based on longevity and an established and recognized track record—information about their programs and problems is especially instructive. It is also consistent with other findings in this study and jibes with what is known about trends in adult literacy generally.

The returns give a useful reading of what is going on among some of the best library literacy programs in the country and some of the most stable. Moreover, if *these* programs have certain problems in common, it can be assumed that other programs have or face many of the same ones, perhaps to an even greater degree.

### **PURPOSES & GOALS**

Table LP1 shows the stated purposes and goals of the participating programs. Collectively the capsule statements attest to great diversity, yet certain shared characteristics stand out.

**LP1. Please describe briefly your program's overall purposes and goals.** (Note: Number of years in operation is indicated in parentheses at the end of each description.)

**AL** LVA Anniston /Calhoun County, Anniston Calhoun County Public Library: We provide one-on-one tutoring to adults in Calhoun County over 19 years old. Free lessons in reading and writing and free materials, free training to literacy tutors but ask that they volunteer 50 hours back into the program. (10)

**AR** Literacy Council of Hot Spring County, Hot Spring County Library: Reading education and literacy (REAL) recruits and train tutors for the adult literacy program and for peer tutoring in county school districts. The goal of REAL is to reduce the rate of illiteracy in adults and children by offering volunteer services of tutoring one-on-one. Cooperation between agencies and organizations is nurtured. Volunteerism of people and organizations is promoted. Library materials, consumable and collection, are purchased. Information is disseminated. (6)

Arkansas River Valley Libraries for Literacy - Reading Together, Arkansas River Valley Regional Library: To assist each person enrolled in the program to reach his/her fullest potential toward becoming a self-sufficient person in terms of decision making, securing employment, providing stable family settings and making worthwhile contributions to the community. (23)

**CA** Adult Literacy Program - Project Upgrade, Napa City County Library: Provide ESL instruction using volunteer tutors, provide materials collections for basic literacy and ESL, provide reference and referral services, advocate and promote community awareness, offer self-education opportunity through audio/ videotapes and computers. (12)

Adult Literacy Program, Alameda County Library, Fremont: Provide learner-centered reading and writing help to English-speaking adults and families through library programs. We provide one-to-one and small group tutoring, tutor training, materials, computer-assisted instruction, family workshops, and pre-reading activities for young children. We have programs in eight libraries of the County and also work with incarcerated adults in the Alameda County jail system. (11)

Partners in Reading, San Jose Public Library: Partners in Reading enables English-speaking adults to improve their basic literacy skills so they may function more effectively on the job and in society, achieve their goals, and develop their knowledge and potential. Through learner/tutor partnerships, our program uses a variety of methods designed to meet individual learning

**Table LPI, cont'd**

needs. As a library literacy program, Partners in Reading helps learners acquire skills that enable them to use the services of public libraries more effectively. (6)

Commerce Public Library Adult Literacy Program: Our adult literacy program serves adults aged 16 and over who wish to improve their basic reading, writing, and math skills. Trained volunteers tutor adults in one-to-one or small group settings. Our goal is to help at least 60 students a year move toward their various goals. (12)

LVA Marin County, San Rafael Public Library: Provide reading, writing, and communication skills for adult students to enable them to achieve their goals on the job and in society. Maintain a literacy curriculum based on learner-centered goals. Train and support volunteer tutors. Match tutors and learners one-on-one or small groups. Empower parents to become a child's first teacher. Provide materials for diverse literacy needs. Develop cross-cultural awareness that creates a sense of community. (10)

CO Adult Reading Program, Mesa County Public Library District: The Program provides free, confidential, individualized reading and writing instruction for adults 16 years of age or older, not enrolled in a regular school program and reading below the 6th grade level. Trained volunteer tutors from the county meet at 35 public places with private meeting space at various times of the day or evening to meet the student's schedule. (10)

CT LVA-Greater Waterbury, Silas Bronson Library: Provide family literacy programs to caregivers of young children. Provide basic literacy and ESL training to adults. (21)

DE Project READS, Sussex County Literacy Council, Sussex County Department of Libraries: Project READS' goal is to help reduce and eventually eliminate adult illiteracy among residents of Sussex County. Its goal is to help increase literacy skills of Sussex County residents by providing basic reading skills training. (6)

LVA-Wilmington Library: LVA/WLA provides free one-to-one tutoring for adults in basic reading and conversational English skills. The student/tutor teams meet twice a week at a time and place convenient for both. A computer lab, Adult Literacy Learning Center, and family literacy services are also provided. (13)

FL Project LEAD, Miami-Dade Public Library System. Project LEAD has a mission to reach adult learners who speak English, but read below a 3rd-grade level, and bring them up to 5th-grade reading level. At that time, they are referred to the County Adult Education classes to go on and get their GED. (10)

**Table LPI, cont'd**

Panhandle Library Literacy Consortium, Jefferson County Public Library: Our program is half family literacy in-house and half outreach to find one-to-one tutors and students. (8)

Tampa-Hillsborough County Library System: Provides one-to-one tutoring in basic literacy and ESL.(10)

Literacy Program, Brevard County Library: Our goal is to assist any resident of our county in reaching his/her personal educational goals. (10)

Lifelong Learning Services, Broward County Public Library: Serving the needs of individuals and families in our community by creating, promoting and implementing environments and tools which support the lifelong learning goals of our patrons, including access to our print and databased materials. These book-based learning services, materials, and tools will be consistent with library traditions of free and open access, self empowerment, and learner control. Trainings to duplicate library learning services are provided to libraries, community agencies, grass roots organizations and volunteers. (15)

Center for Adult Learning, Jacksonville Public Libraries: The goal of the Center for Adult Learning (CAL) is to provide functionally illiterate adults the opportunity and resources with which to "function successfully on the job and in society, achieve [their] individual goals and develop [their] knowledge and potential." We also provide a bridge between one-to-one tutoring programs and the GED classroom. Using computer-assisted instruction enhances the learning process and increases the self-confidence of the students. We also provide a New Reader Collection in the Main Library and all branch libraries in the system. (10.5)

GA Learning Center, Athens-Clarke County Public Library. Our program is geared to promote lifelong learning. We firmly believe that if we equip adult new learners with the skills necessary to participate in society, whether it be on a social or economic level, then this will ultimately lead to the eradication of illiteracy. As adults become more literate they will pass on their love of education to their offspring who in turn will strive to make positive impacts on society. We strive to instill "all adults successful" and provide the tools necessary to make that come to pass. (8)

Literacy Program, DeKalb County Public Library: To increase the level of literacy in DeKalb County, the library assists community literacy efforts by providing materials, space, and referral services. (10)

IL LVA-Elgin, Gail Borden Public Library. Provide adult literacy education in a non-threatening environment. (12)

**Table LPI, cont'd**

Family Literacy Partnership, Bensenville

Library: Family Literacy Partnership existed [as a formal program] 92/93 & 93/94. Family literacy focusing on parent/child skills. Literature based. (2)

Libraries for Literacy in Lake County,

Waukegan Public Library: Our mission statement says "...to extend educational opportunities to Lake County adult students and their families." (10)

**IN** Literacy Program, Michigan City Public Library: Our program provides individual tutoring through volunteer tutors for adult non-readers, low-level readers, intermediate readers who want to get a GED or go to college, and newcomers to our country who need to learn conversational English. We also offer a family literacy program aimed at helping parents read to their children. Recently we opened our program to children who are tutored both at the library and at school. Numerous requests from parents for such help moved us in this direction along with the fact that adult enrollment has dropped due to greater job availability at present. (8)

Library Literacy Program, Anderson Public

Library: We're in the business of helping adults over the age of 16 who are not in school improve their reading and writing skills through the use of volunteer tutors in one-on-one or small group instruction. We also help adults who are learning ESL in the same way. We offer phonics and computer instruction, as well. (10)

Knox County Literacy Program, Knox County

Public Library: To promote the Library as a lifelong learning center. To promote public awareness and community involvement in solving civic, social, educational, health, and employment problems. To provide basic reading, writing, spelling, and math help to adults and families. To provide tutor training services, as well as materials for students and tutors, adult new-reader and circulation literacy collection. To develop cooperative links with area businesses and community/social organizations also interested in working with adult nonreaders or beginning readers, etc. (4)

**KS** Project Finish, Johnson County Library, Shawnee Mission: Provide learning opportunities for adults 16 years of age and older who are no longer enrolled in school and have not obtained a functional basic education. Instruction is directed toward mastering competency skills in English, including speaking, reading and writing English, and basic math skills. In addition, preparation for the GED exam is provided. (10)

**MA** Read Write/Now Program, Springfield City Library-Mason Square Branch: To provide adult basic education and a family literacy program using a whole language-based model. Curriculum is developed based on learners' interests, needs, and goals. (8)

**Table LPI, cont'd**

Center for New Americans, Jones Library:

To facilitate access, communication, and linkages with newcomer groups and institutions, employers, and agencies in the Pioneer Valley. Accommodate the varying needs/schedules/interests of students by providing a choice of study options (classroom, one-to-one tutoring, computer-aided instruction) and support services (advocacy referrals, job search, childcare, counseling). (9)

Newcomer Family Literacy Project, Lawrence

Public Library: The Library's ESOL-based family literacy program integrates language and literacy studies with parenting skills and library skills development. Curriculum is grounded in exercises that use the library to increase the ability of newcomers to communicate in English, develop independent learning skills, gain exposure to technology, and become more effective parents. (8)

Literacy Program, Thomas Crane Public

Library: To provide instruction in basic reading and writing to adults in order for them to meet their needs and reach their goals. (10)

**MD** Project Literacy, Howard County Library:

Project Literacy provides free one-to-one instruction by volunteer tutors to any adult who lives or works in Howard County. Clients come to learn how to read, improve their reading/writing/speaking skills, learn English, learn functional math skills, and learn how to function in a literate society. (8)

**MI** MARC Literacy Program, Greenville Public

Library: Our program] provides one-to-one tutoring to adults in Montcalm County having 0-8 grade reading or math skills, and teaches ESL to ethnic minorities with limited English-language proficiency. (9.5)

**MN** Franklin Learning Center, Franklin Community

Library, Minneapolis Public Library: Provide free, flexible, self-paced instruction to adults aged 16 and older who read, write, and compute below a 12th grade level. [Basic goals are] to serve 450 learners a year, improve skill levels in 35% of enrollees, recruit/maintain 60 tutors a year. [Another goal is] to collaborate in at least 4 multicultural, multi-agency presentations (sic). (7))

Linking Libraries & Literacy for Lifelong

Learning, Lexington Branch Library, St. Paul: Develop an active partnership between the library and the Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning of the Saint Paul Public Schools, creating a successful link for adult learners with the free and easily accessible resources of the library. Staff training for the organizations includes hands-on training in new CD-ROM products, joint orientations, and sessions to address the needs of adult learners. Hubbs staff and students will help the library select new adult reading materials. A direct computer link to the library on-line catalog and its "information kiosk" will be installed at the Hubbs Center. (1)

*Table LPI, cont'd*

**NC** Community of Readers, Glenwood Library: Library directs Community of Readers, a network of over 50 organizations and agencies working to promote reading and literacy. Three branches offer classes in the library (GED, ESL). All libraries provide materials. (6)

**NE** Platte Valley Literacy Association, Columbus Public Library: In cooperation with Central Community College, [the Association] provides ABE at no cost to students 16 years or older, and not enrolled in school. This includes English as a second language classes, preparation for GED testing, basic adult literacy self-study, and living skills. In addition, PVLA offers tutoring for adults and a family literacy program for adult students and their families and at-risk families in the community. We are located in the public library and receive in-kind support, but do not receive funding through the City or the library. (15)

**NJ** Basic Skills for Reading & ESL, Elizabeth Public Library: Our program's overall purposes and goals are to improve the basic skills for English, reading, and math for adult residents of Elizabeth. (9)

Literacy for Non-English Speakers, Paterson Free Public Library: Our overall purpose is to empower our students [to take control of and be able to] change their own lives. We follow a student-centered approach, allowing learners to focus on what they feel they need to learn. We encourage them to progress from learning how to read to reading to learn. We hope they'll take a more active interest in their own community. (5)

**NM** LVA-Socorro County, Socorro Public Library: Provide basic reading, ESL, computer literacy and family literacy programs. (6)

**NY** Library Literacy Center of Prendergast Library, Jamestown: The Library Literacy Center is a library-sponsored, Laubach-affiliated, adult basic literacy program which, using adult volunteer tutors, provides one-to-one literacy help to adult learners who come to us for help. Although our primary focus is the teaching of reading, we also try to work with the student's other literacy needs such as math, spelling, GED preparation, if we are able and if the student wants that kind of help. (3)

Literacy Program, Brooklyn Public Library: To teach adults how to write and read and navigate life intelligently using technology and all resources available to all citizens. (18)

Centers for Reading and Writing, New York Public Library: **Population Served:** As part of the NYC Adult Literacy Initiative, [we fulfill our] commitment to neighborhoods throughout the City by providing culturally diverse populations opportunities for lifelong learning. The Library is committed to serving adult

*Table LPI, cont'd*

learners who have a range of personal, professional, and occupational goals. Within the NYC provider network, the libraries are mandated to offer literacy instruction to adults who are at the beginning stages of their reading development (0-4.9). Without [our] program these learners would have limited access to instruction as they would test too low on standardized tests to enter Board of Education or Community College programs. In addition, budget reductions have forced the Board and CUNY to reduce the number of pre-GED classes offered. **Program Development:** The Centers are committed to remaining current in instructional methodology, assessment procedures, curriculum development and the implementation of new program initiatives. **Volunteer Training:** In NYC, the Library literacy programs are funded as volunteer programs. New York Public Library is committed to the recruitment and training of volunteer tutors, who are the primary providers of direct instruction. **Collection Development:** Part of our funding is allocated to develop collections of print materials for adult new readers. These collections, located at CRW sites, can be borrowed by all students enrolled in the program. The Library also makes these resources available to practitioners at other NYC literacy programs, in the form of deposit collection loans. Instructors may visit a site and select materials appropriate for their classes. Over the past 12 years, the Library has established Lifelong Learning collections at all 82 branch libraries. These are available for borrowing by the general public. **Technology:** Computer instruction is used in the 8 CRW programs. We have been working since FY94 to upgrade hardware and software to enable students to capitalize on multimedia advances in educational technology. **Family Literacy:** We have embarked on a system-wide initiative to expand family literacy. As a result of a series of workshops in early 1995, we are currently engaged in developing a Families Writing curriculum. (11)

**OK** Moore Literacy Council, Cleveland County Library: The Council provides free, confidential one-on-one tutoring to any adult in the area who wants to learn to read or to improve reading skills. (5)

Great Plains Literacy Council, Southern Prairie Library System: To provide individual tutoring to low-level literacy and ESL adult students in order to raise the literacy level of our country and enable people to become more competent employees, parents, and citizens. We target families through special parent reading programs and the workplace through a business site ESL class. (10)

Literacy Council of LeFlore County, Buckley Public Library: To provide tutoring in reading and the English language to adults in the 1,510 square mile county; train tutors and trainers; promote the interest and cooperative efforts of other groups in the community; work cooperatively with other literacy providers in the state and nation. (10)

**Table LPI, cont'd**

**OR** LEARN Project, Eugene Public Library: LEARN (Literacy Education and Referral Network) draws a variety of people and agencies together to solve problems of common interest regarding adult basic and bilingual education, serves as support services for volunteer tutors and their organizations, provides books and materials to all county libraries and volunteer groups, recruits volunteers and students, referring them to appropriate education or other resources. (10)

**PA** Reader Development Program, Free Library of Philadelphia: The RDP enhances the Library's role of provider of support for learners of all ages by locating, evaluating, purchasing, and distributing to Philadelphia literacy agencies and to individual adults the best learning materials written on a low reading level on a wide range of subjects. RDP serves adults of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, and learning needs. RDP also stocks a wide range of low-reading-level leisure reading materials, providing adult new readers with popular genre books written on the 8th grade reading level or below. RDP also provides limited amounts of GED materials to satisfy state funding mandates. (28)

Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program, Bradford County Library: The goal of our Literacy Program is to reduce illiteracy in Bradford and Wyoming Counties. The Literacy Program trains volunteer tutors and provides free and confidential one-to-one tutoring for adults and teenagers. It recruits, trains, and supports volunteer tutors. It also provides support for its adult literacy students. (15)

**RI** LVA Kent County, Coventry Public Library: Our literacy program provides tutor training in Basic Literacy (reading and writing) and ESL to help functionally illiterate adults to improve reading, writing, and conversational English skills. (15)

**SC** Literacy Program, Greenville County Library: For many years we have provided materials, a board member for the local literacy agency, tutoring space, and encouragement to the community effort. Now we are becoming more directly involved by designating space at a new branch to be used by that community literacy association. We have also conducted an award-winning literacy awareness campaign, always working very closely with the Greenville Literacy Association. (?)

**TX** LVA-Sterling Municipal Library: Teach adults to read and/or speak English in 0-5 reading level. Orient these adults to all library services. Prepare adults to succeed with their tutors by teaching basic study skills. Create lifelong independent library users. (10)

Literacy Center, El Paso Public Library: The Center assists individuals of all ages find the services and resources they need to learn how to read and write, to become legal residents or U.S. citizens, to obtain their ED, to become computer literate, to know how to use

**Table LPI, cont'd**

the library, and to help them achieve their goals and develop their knowledge and potential. Since 1989 the Center offers five areas of service free to the public: information and referral, a materials collection, instruction services, community outreach and promotion, and research and development. We provide computers for self-paced instruction, recruit and train volunteer tutors and match them with students, offer library facilities to outside agencies and volunteer tutors for small group literacy and ABE education. (6)

Proyecto Adelante, Weslaco Public Library: To teach ESL, pre-GED, and GED to help any person from the area who wants to study. (7)

Literacy Programs, Harris County Public Library: To increase opportunities for adults in the surrounding communities of 11 branch libraries to receive individual or small group instruction in literacy or ESL using trained volunteers and materials. (8)

Andrews Adult Literacy Program, Andrews Public Library: We try to meet everyone's goals. We provide ESL, pre-GED, GED, citizenship, and of course, basic literacy for those who can't read at all. Many of our students have graduated from high school, but do not have skills to attend college. Some just need special skills, such as typing. We assist them in filling out forms or studying for special projects at work. Our biggest classes are pre-GED level: those reading at a 5th-8th grade level. (10)

**UT** Bridgerland Literacy, Logan Library: We provide one-on-one literacy and ESL instruction to adults in Cache County (northern Utah). Instruction is provided by trained volunteer tutors, and is free and individualized. Curriculum is closely tied to individual goals and needs, especially goals relating to parenting, jobs, or personal skills. (8)

**VA** Literacy Program, Newport News Public Library: There are four (4) components to the Newport News Library System's Literacy Program. We provide individual tutoring, workplace literacy and pre-GED classes, and also family literacy programs. Our focus is to provide a skills enhancement program that will diminish the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy. (10)

**WA** Project READ, Longview Public Library: Family literacy program—offers literacy tutoring to address the needs of the adult learner and at the same time teach the adults the skills and attitudes they need to help their children and grandchildren be successful learners in school. The focus is intergenerational learning and support. (9)

Library Literacy Program/Lifelong Learning, Seattle Public Library: Our literacy programming includes services for both native English speakers and limited English speakers. We operate a Literacy Action

**Table LP1, cont'd**

Center where one-to-one tutoring takes place, and where we provide an in-house lending library, computer access for students, and a mentor program for volunteer tutors. The Center is a special project of Washington Literacy. The Library collaborates with the Literacy Center in a family literacy program called Start Smart, which is coordinated by the Children's Librarian. Other programs/services include Born to Read (for mothers with newborn or very young children), The Reading Place (space in the Central Library and 10 branches where students and tutors may use books and other information for the new adult reader), and various ESL services including direct instruction, audiocassette technology and a special ESL reading collection. (9)

**WI** LVA Chippea Valley/Eau Claire, L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library: An affiliate of LVA national, we serve as the national LVA liaison for the state of Wisconsin. LVA-CV provides literacy services to adults and families in a regional area where some 60% of the population lives on farms or small communities. We provide one-to-one tutoring and recruit and train volunteer tutors for the program. Sharing the mission of our national parent organization, we strive to develop strong local partnerships...create community awareness...develop effective funding strategies...undertake effective student and tutor recruiting and instruction...provide facilities conducive to learning...operate family literacy programs...support workplace education programs...and pursue "cutting edge" developments in techniques and materials, including greater use of technology where appropriate. Based on the work of a Strategic Planning Committee, we have adopted a long-range plan to further develop our outreach and effectiveness. (10)

**WV** Literacy Program, Monroe County & Peterstown Public Libraries: To provide a comprehensive literacy program that serves all segments of the population of Monroe County. To promote family literacy in reading, writing, and math. To develop and implement a training program for tutors of math. To remove barriers that prevent a rural population from participating in literacy programs. (6)

The overarching purpose of most of the programs is to help low-skilled, out-of-school adults acquire the reading, math, and ESL proficiency needed to meet their personally determined functional goals.

Respect for students, for the process of learning, and for individualized curricula and teaching pervades the thinking.

A focus on one-on-one and small group tutoring—with heavy use

of volunteers in the instructional role—is strongly in evidence.

The majority of programs concentrate on serving the most poorly skilled adults (often expressed in 5th-6th grade-equivalency terms)—although GED-preparation and ESL services are standard program features as well.

Another common thread is a serious and growing interest in family literacy.

Many of the programs are LVA and Laubach affiliates housed in the local public library. [Note: While this is only suggested by the Table LP 1 profiles, explanatory comments in several tables of the background data book validate the observation.] Some are obviously programs of other kinds of community-based organizations. A few have employment as a goal of instruction. Others are programs actually staffed and operated by the libraries.

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**POPULATIONS SERVED**

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The point that needs emphasizing most is that in providing basic

literacy services to adults at the lowest end of the proficiency spectrum, public libraries are giving educational access to people most in need of help and most likely *not* to get it from schools and traditional ABE programs.

The profiles make it clear that this service focus is the most unique and defining feature of public library adult literacy programs.

Demographic and program data supplied in LP 2 and LP 5 reinforce the point. For example, of the approximately 53,000 students served by these 63 programs in FY95, more than half (55%) were members of economically and socially disadvantaged minority groups (32% Hispanic, 23% Black). Some 36% were unemployed, and, conversely, 50% were employed either part-time or full-time. A full 93% were between 17 and 59 years of age.

Too little data was given to produce corresponding percentages for those on public assistance and those who had not completed high school, but notes included in the background data book indicate



**LP2.** *By percentage, indicate the makeup of your adult student body in FY95 by age, ethnicity/race, gender, employment status, whether on public assistance, and other demographic variables you consider important.* [Q4 only]

<b>Gender</b>	<u>Male</u> 45%	<u>Female</u> 55%	(Of approximately 53,000 students)			
<b>Ethnicity/Race</b>	<u>Black</u> 23%	<u>White</u> 30%	<u>Asian</u> 11%	<u>Hispanic</u> 32%	<u>NAmer</u> 1%	<u>Other</u> 1.5%
<b>Work Status</b>	<u>Employed</u> 50%		<u>Unemployed</u> 36	<u>Retired/Other</u> 14		
<b>Age Group</b>	<u>16 &amp; Under</u> 3%	<u>17 to 25/29</u> 22%	<u>25/29 to 44/49</u> 55%	<u>45/49 to 59</u> 15%	<u>60+</u> 6%	

Note: Most programs did not give data on the number of students on public assistance or on education attainment (many apparently do not collect it). But notes added to the data supplied indicate a heavy school noncompletion rate among the adult literacy students of the programs, as well as heavy public assistance rates.

**LP3.** *How many years has your program been in operation?* [Q4 only]  
**LP4.** *How long have you been in your present position?* [Q4 only]

On Average, Years Programs in Operation	9.9 years
On Average, Years In Present Position	6 years

**LP5.** *Please indicate the size of your program in FY95 with respect to the following indicators:*

	A <u>All Programs</u>	B <u>Without 3-6 Programs That Seriously Skew</u>	
# Full-Time Staff	Range: 1 to 25 Total: 138.25 Average: 2.2	Range: 1 to 6 Total: 79.25 Average: 1.34	] a
# Part-Time Staff	Range: 1 to 34 Total: 196 Average: 3.1	1 to 8 Total: 110 Average: 1.9	] b
# Paid Staff (FT & PT)	Range: 1 to 55 Total: 320.25 Average: 5	1 to 8 Total: 144.25 Average: 2.62	] c
# Voluntary Staff	Range: 1 to 900 Total: 6,623 Average: 105	1 to 243 Total: 4,063 Average: 73	] d
Operating Budgets	Range: \$2,500 to \$1,189,013 Total: \$5,713,011 Average: \$92,145	\$2,500 to \$176,000 Total: \$2,765,403 \$44,134	] e
#Students In FY95	Range: 11 to 28,636 Total: 53,242 Average: 858	Range: 11 to 600 Total: 8,537 Average: 152	] f

- a Excludes NYC & Broward County (FL) programs
- b Excludes NYC and 2 LVA programs
- c Excludes NYC, 2 LVA, & 3 Other Programs
- d Excludes 6 programs whose volunteers number between 300-900
- e Excludes 5 programs w/budgets \$250,000+, incl. New York & Brooklyn @ \$1,032,000 & \$781,000
- f Excludes 5 programs with students of 1,500+, incl. RDP (Phila.) @ 28,636 & DeKalb County (GA) @ 8,448

that the rate for both in FY95 was very high. Moreover, a disproportionately high percentage of students in voluntary and CBO adult literacy programs generally are known to have these characteristics.

### **PROGRAM LONGEVITY**

The programs included in this survey are about ten years old on average (LP 3). But, as the background data book shows, only thirteen of them (21%) have been in existence for thirteen years or more—predating the time (around 1983) when the national adult literacy movement began to gather full steam. This means that some 80% of the programs appear to have come into being as a result of that movement.

Interestingly, the background data book shows that about 74% of the programs have been in operation ten years or less, corresponding to the time period in which LSCA Title VI grants have been made (the first round was awarded in FY86). This fact has great importance in considering the heavy dependence the programs have on federal funding (see LP 6). At the time of questioning, some 65% of

**LP6. What are your principal sources of funding? Check all that apply, giving relative percentages if possible. [Q4only]**

Q4 Local Programs (63 of 63 responded, 100%)

	<u># (%) of Respondees Indicating This Source</u>	<u>% Of Total Funding</u>
Federal grants	41 (65%)	39%
Local government	40 (63%)	28
State government	25 (40%)	10
State library system/agency	24 (38%)	8
Foundation grants	16 (25%)	4
Individual donations	29 (46%)	3
Local/state business & industry	19 (30%)	2
Other*	20 (32%)*	6*

\* The main source cited under Other was the United Way. Also included, although infrequently, were such sources as Veterans of Foreign Wars/Chamber of Commerce, Friends of the Library, special projects such as spelling bees, the regular library budget, service organizations, LSCA, and local government in one form or another.

program budget was about \$92,000 (ranging from a low of \$2,500 to one at \$1.2 million).

Looked at another way, using Column A averages, in FY95 there were:

**1 full-time staff member for every 390 students**

**1 paid staff for every 172 students**

**1 volunteer tutor for every 8 students**

**\$107 spent during the year per student**

Column B probably provides a more realistic picture, however, because it omits the three to six very large programs that skew Column A results.

According to Column B, in FY95 the programs had only 1.34 full-time staff members and 1.9 part-time staff, for an overall average of 3.2. Of this total, 2.6 (81%) were paid staff, the others donated their services. The average number of volunteer tutors in the programs was 73 (the range extends from 1 to 243). The average number of students served was 152 (ranging from 11 to 600). And, the average program budget was about \$44,000 (ranging from a low of \$2,500 to a high of \$176,000).

the programs surveyed had partial federal funding, with federal grants accounting for some 40% of their total overall funding. (State funding was very small at 10% of the total.) This relationship is just another indicator of how the muscle, perhaps the survivability, of so many of the programs will be affected by the loss of LSCA Title VI funding (unless an adequate level of federal funding is retained in some other form and earmarked for library literacy).

It is interesting to note in passing that directors of

the programs have, on average, been on their jobs for about six years (LP 4), long enough to have their fingers solidly on the pulse of local literacy needs and to fully understand the pressures under which their programs operate. But only about one-third of them have been in their positions long enough to know firsthand what life was like before LSCA Title VI.

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**GETTING BLOOD FROM A STONE**

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The findings of Question LP 5 underscore once again just how much library literacy programs

have been doing with extremely limited resources. In this respect, they are like the SLRCs.

As Column A shows, in FY95, the 63 programs included in the survey had, on average, only 2.2 full-time staff members and 3.1 part-time staff, for an overall average of 5.3. Of this total, 5 were paid staff (94%), and the rest donated their services. The average number of volunteer tutors in the programs was 105 (the range extends from 1 to 900). The average number of students served was 858 (ranging from 11 to 28,636). And the average

**LP7. In which size population area is your program located?**

Q4 Local Programs (61 respondees of possible 63, 97%)

	<u># Programs</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Under 1,000		0%
1,000 to 2,499		0
2,500 to 4,999		0
5,000 to 9,999	3	5
10,000 to 24,999	6	10
25,000 to 49,999	5	8
50,000 to 99,999	15	25
100,000 to 249,999	13	21
250,000 to 499,999	5	8
500,000 to 999,999	8	13
1 million plus	6	10

**LP 8. Which of the following are regular services/features of your library literacy program?**

Q4 Local Programs (61 responses of possible 63, 97%)

Provide/develop book collections for adult new readers	97%
Provide/develop student/tutor learning materials	97
Provide space for classes/meetings of other groups	90
Provide information and/or referral services	94
Provide tutor training/direct instruction with own staff	89
Use computer technology for program management purposes	83

**LP 9. If your program provides direct tutor training and/or instruction, which of the following components does the instructional program have?**

Q4 Local Programs (56 responses of 63, 89%)

One-to-one tutoring	89%
Regular collaboration with outside agencies/providers	88
ESL	79
ABE	79
Use computers for instruction/training	79
Use TV/video for instruction/training	71
Family literacy	64
Small group tutoring	64
Off-site instruction	57
GED	34
Workforce/workplace literacy	25

**LP 10. If your program provides direct tutor training and/or instruction, please indicate the basic educational philosophy that guides it, indicating the curricular & instructional approach taken (e.g. whole language, phonics).**

Q4 Local Programs (53 responses of 63, 84%)

Whole language base	40%
Phonics base	28
Eclectic/Other	32

On average, then, in all but the largest programs, there were in FY95:

**1 full-time staff member for every 114 students**

**1 paid staff for every 47 students**

**1 volunteer tutor for every 2 students**

**\$290 spent during the year per student**

Whether one prefers either of the above measures or others that could be derived from the data given, the basic point is clear: adult literacy programs and services offered by public libraries do so by rubbing pennies. No other part of the educational world is given so little to work with.

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**STABLE FUNDING:  
A SURVIVAL ISSUE**

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That library literacy programs are a clear financial bargain is a positive feature to be recognized in any future effort to more clearly articulate their unique role and purpose.

But the downside is that where everything humanly possible has already been wrung from inadequate budgets, even a small funding cut can spell disaster.

So, again, **thousands of library literacy programs appear to be facing a bleak future: if present funding trends continue most will lose muscle from their programs and many will be forced to close.**

(Section 4 of this report, in questions F2 and F3, was very clear on this point where loss of federal funding is concerned—although local program respondees don't seem to recognize this as fully as the other three respondent groups do.)

The responses to question LP 13 make the point in more specific terms: Lack of stable funding and equitable access to it is the most widely perceived barrier to future program success and survivability. But in LP 13 the programs also point to overburdened staffs...the shrinking pool of volunteer tutors (*necessitating more paid staff*)...long tutor and student waiting lists...lack of space...and weak state and national commitment—common refrains throughout this study and essentially problems of funding.

### **OTHER PROGRAM FEATURES**

Questions LP 7 - LP 11 reveal a variety of other

**LP11. If your program provides its own instruction and/or tutor training services, what percentage of the instructional/training staff are:**

Externally-recruited ABE professionals and/or volunteers	81%
Librarians/library staff	14
Other	4

  

**LP12. Please check any of the following services that your program receives regularly from the following four sources.**

Q4 Local Programs (61 responses of 63 possible, 97%)

	State Library Agency	Regional Library	SLRC	Other Entity
State advocacy	50%	33%	44%	23%
National advocacy	23	15	28	33
Public awareness	28	57	43	43
Policy development & planning	8	46	23	11
Statewide conferencing	41	15	46	41
Professional staff development	25	38	54	38
Program development	15	44	26	34
Curriculum development	2	26	26	31
Evaluation/assessment	13	21	23	36
Training tutors and/or trainees	7	31	20	41
Applying research to practice	7	15	18	21
Fundraising/resource dev.	8	41	15	31
Data collection & analysis	23	28	28	26
Lending library resources	26	54	31	13
Grant funds	49	31	15	41

program characteristics, some of which confirm findings suggested earlier and some that raise other interesting issues which invite future research attention:

The 63 public library literacy programs included in this study represent towns and cities of virtually every *population size* (LP 7). That they have a great deal in common is obvious.

The provision and development of *book collections and learning*

It is quite significant that the average life of most programs in this study (with the exception of the pioneer programs) is about 10 years. To me, this shows the correlation between Title VI funding and the establishment of new programs. The end of Title VI will be "crunch time" for many of them. Over and over and over again throughout the survey is the cry for solid, stable funding. Part of the problem comes from the communities themselves which have chosen to rely on "soft money" because it has always been there. Library literacy programs have not been solidified in the library budget...and are always looking over their shoulder to avoid a disaster "next year." Of course the problem is not unique to library literacy programs. (Shelley Quezada, MA)

materials for students and tutors is the most consistent service feature across all programs, regardless of size, population base, or type (LP 8). A full 97% of the

local public library literacy programs provide such materials.

Some 89% of the programs provide direct tutor training and instruc-

tional services using their own paid staffs, but the data do not tell whether the programs are outside groups being housed in the library or programs directly operated by the

library. Data given earlier indicate that the majority of library-based literacy programs are outside voluntary and CBO groups which have been given a home and library administrative supports. But library-staffed and library-operated programs, while probably not in the majority, are nevertheless known to be quite substantial in number.

Furthermore, whether or not the library itself provides the direct instruction, programs of all types can have both external and internal staff—and volunteers are, of course, a feature of them all.

The response to LP 11 is similarly problematic. **Librarians and library staff themselves make up only about 14% of the instructional staff** in programs of direct instruction, with externally recruited adult education professionals and volunteers accounting for more than 80%. This gives a further sense of program texture and the nature of library involvement, but it doesn't reveal anything new about program type, extent of library

**LP13. What are the 2-3 greatest barriers to effective service in your program and in the nature and extent of your outreach?**

Q4 Local Programs (53 respondees of 63, 84%)

**# Times Cited**

Lack of stable/adequate funding/impending government decreases	42
Poor funding access	3
Funders favor project support over basic operating support	1
Turf battles/difficult to compete with more powerful ABE-GED interests	3
Too few staff/too few qualified staff	12
Too few resources for staff/teacher development and training	5
Pool of volunteer tutors is shrinking/more paid staff needed to tutor	3
Too much staff time needed for fundraising	3
Barriers to student participation (e.g. childcare, transportation)	7
Community education misconceptions/libraries not viewed as educational agents or partners	6
Too little media attention to keep national awareness/visibility up	2
Limited national commitment	2
Low state funding commitment	1
Little state library support	1
Tutor and student recruitment problems	11
Long tutor and student waiting lists	2
Retaining students/tutors	2
Lack of tutoring/program space	6
Poor coordination/collaboration among various groups	4
Limited hours of program operation	2
Limited understanding by librarians	2
Limited access to low-level, cutting-edge materials	1
Too little literacy staff involvement in library decision-making about their programs	1
The quick-fix mentality	1
Inability to diagnose learning disabilities	1
Barriers between children's and adult education programming	1
Interplay between employment status, skills required for jobs, and economic conditions	1

commitment, or issues of training. The whole area is one that should be examined more carefully in future research.

Considering that library literacy programs generally serve adults at the lowest level and thus follow nontraditional instructional approaches, it is not surprising that among most of those surveyed (80%) there is **heavy reliance on one-to-one tutoring** (LP 9). But it is significant, in terms of instructional and cost effectiveness, that there has been a substantial adoption of small group instruction over the past decade or so, with 64% of the surveyed programs having this feature—usually in addition to one-on-one, not as a complete substitute.

With respect to **technology**, there was speculation in Section 2 that local programs are already making heavy use of computers. The responses to LP 8 and LP 9 confirm this. The tables show that some 83% of the programs surveyed use computer technology for program management purposes, while 79% use computers for instructional purposes. Furthermore, some 71%

use television and video technology for instructional and training purposes (though the data don't show what form this use takes).

Other program features in evidence, as before, are the heavy attention to **servicing ESL adults** (79% of the programs provide ESL services) and the high involvement in **family literacy** (64%).

It is also interesting that about 25% of the programs work in some way in **workforce and workplace literacy**. This finding is consistent with other study data, and the state program data in Section 5 (LAPD 2-4) suggests that in at least some states the level of involvement is even higher.

Moreover, one of the early advisors to this project, the director of the long-established Brooklyn Public Library literacy program, believes that library literacy service to part- and full-time employed persons should make the programs more fundable rather than less, but she worries that the extensiveness of this service is not fully recognized. Here is yet another subject in need of future attention.

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## WHOLE LANGUAGE PREDOMINATES

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Question LP 10 aimed to identify the theoretical underpinnings of the instructional programs surveyed.

Of the 53 programs (84%) responding to the question, 40% are based on whole language principles (the basic approach of Literacy Volunteers of America). Some 28% are based on phonics (the traditional Laubach Literacy method). And 32% use a combination of approaches, some including whole language and/or phonics. [Note: Many programs based on whole language also use phonics to help students with their pronunciation.]

Very little useful research has been done on whether whole language, phonics, or other methods work best as the foundation for adult reading programs. Moreover, the answer might well differ depending on the actual make-up of the student clientele from program to program, a relationship the survey did not address. In any case, the issue is of secondary importance in the present climate,

though it may be a good candidate for the future research agenda.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that as understanding has grown about the motivational needs of adult learners and the importance of functional context learning, the use of whole language also has grown. It takes into account the background knowledge that adults bring to the learning experience. It starts from the knowledge that most low-skilled adults already have encoding and decoding skills; they just cannot read at a high enough level to be able to extract meaning from the material. And it recognizes intrinsically that the purpose of lifting adult basic skills levels is not to give individuals an arbitrary grade-level equivalency but to enable them *to do* something, *to function* in necessary tasks of living and working.

It is also worthy of note that in a 1988 study of 23 LVA, Laubach, and eclectic programs in Illinois, the Illinois State University found that LVA students had significantly more grade-level gain than students in the

**LC1. What opportunities and advantages (or freedoms and creativity) are possible in library literacy programs specifically because they operate within a library culture?**  
[Q2, Q3, Q4]

Q2 State Library Literacy Contacts (30 of 44, 68%)  
Q3 SLRCs (32 of 40, 80%)  
Q4 Local Programs (62 of 63, 98%)

	Q2	Q3	Q4
Materials: Libraries give access to new reader materials, books, audiocassettes, free collections, video materials/are excellent sources of instructional & tutor training materials/ provide access to wide array of materials	13	18	36
Less formal, non-school settings/fewer requisites for participation, non-threatening to adults, flexibility in learning and teaching/user friendly/nondiscriminatory/stigma-free/ respectful of individuality, individual need/neutral sites/ focus on personal development	15	9	19
Provide an atmosphere that respects confidentiality/ anonymity	3	2	3
Libraries are linked to so many other resources/organizations/ have the freedom to work with other agencies as community education partners/are a referral source to other education and social services	3	1	4
Libraries' hours are longer and year-round, allowing for 5 greater flexibility in scheduling literacy activities		5	2
Students become comfortable with library/learn library use/ can take part in library resources/programs before-while-after learning to read/exposure to speakers and activities not otherwise available/students can bring friends and family there	6	1	13
Libraries have trained, knowledgeable, dedicated staff/ administrative supports/programs already in place that literacy programs can draw on	2	2	11
Libraries have buildings with space for classes and meetings/quality space	3	2	13
Libraries have varied resources available	2	2	9
Libraries have technological resources for tutors & students/ including computers, faxes, photocopiers, etc./ Internet access	4	3	14
Libraries offer programs/access for the whole family/ are ideal setting for intergenerational activities	6	9	7
Libraries treat all patrons with respect as individuals, are nonjudgmental	5	1	4
Libraries have a public service culture and provide open access to everyone	2	3	1
Libraries are a recognized natural setting for reading and learning/they foster respect for and use of knowledge/ students are surrounded by peers who love to read/ shared love of learning to read	2	4	15
Location: proximity to home or work makes libraries very responsive to community need/very accessible/ central location	1	3	3

other two program types (as measured by the Slosson Oral Reading Test given at three-month intervals during a one-year period). Moreover, they did so even though they had much lower scores at the beginning than students in the other programs. In that same study, Laubach students using a traditional phonics-based program had the least gain, despite having tested highest at the outset.

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**STATE LIBRARY TECHNICAL SUPPORT IS SUBSTANTIAL**

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Question LP 12 provides another measure of the support services local library literacy programs have been getting from three primary sources, state library agencies, regional libraries within the state, and SLRCs. The data show that all three sources provide significant help in areas of essential need, and that substantial help comes to the local programs from other sources as well.

Several aspects of the response are worth highlighting:

First, despite the fact that earlier tables show

library literacy programs to be infrequently thought of by most SLRCs, the local programs indicate that the SLRCs provide them, on balance, with more extensive technical assistance help than state and regional libraries do.

Second, regional libraries have a larger overall technical assistance role than state libraries, and are the main source of public awareness help, policy development and planning, and fundraising assistance. They are also the largest provider of lending library resources.

Third, in the eyes of local programs, state libraries nevertheless provide some help in *all* substantive areas of need, and they have the dominant role in state advocacy and provision of grant funds. They also have a major role in state-wide conferencing activity.

Given the purpose of this study, the point that matters most here is that **although state library agencies are not the dominant source of most local program support, they are nevertheless a highly important source.**

Moreover, it is very significant that the local

*Table LC1, cont'd*

	Q2	Q3	Q4
Reference & research techniques are more easily taught in a library/training is available in the use of the library/opportunity to learn about role and importance of library	2	1	1
Libraries are subject to fewer regulations (e.g. class size, teacher credentialing)	3		2
Library patrons are a source of volunteer tutors	1		4
Libraries have a commitment to lifelong learning	1		3
Librarians/libraries are pro-active and offer a supportive environment	1		5
Libraries are avenues to information literacy/they instill sense of empowerment through reading and information services	2		2
Marketing and public relations efforts that are creative and ongoing	1		2
Literacy program is highly visible and has a built-in credibility because of location within the library/prestige of library enhances literacy program		1	12
Libraries are a source of staff training		1	2
Safety: Safe places for tutoring, especially in urban areas		1	1
Space and other services are free		1	3
Sources of literacy hotlines/helplines for all provider groups, adults of all ages	2		
Library-based programs are programs of choice	1		
Ability to sponsor tutor/student/business recognition events	1		
Flexibility—if something is not working, it can be changed immediately	1		
Quiet community-centered atmosphere		1	
More stable revenue stream if included as budget line item		3	
Statewide electronic network of information and materials		2	
Libraries sometimes provide the only literacy program in a community			1
Libraries provide access to federal and state grant money			2
Access to funding information/to funds			5
Literacy program is stronger because it can draw on other library programs/departments/services			5
Libraries give literacy programs direct contact with wide range of clients/with public			2
Library branches are a source of referral to main library literacy program/referral information is readily available/library staff is adept at spotting nonreaders and making referrals			3
Literacy program is part of library's WWW home page			1



**Table LC1, cont'd**

	<u>Q2</u>	<u>Q3</u>	<u>Q4</u>
Volunteer tutors have an opportunity to recommend purchases for library's collection			1
Libraries are more trusted than other institutions			1
Students are exposed to diverse points of view			1
Library networks with large number of branches make extensive outreach possible			1
Inner-city locations expose students to cultural richness			1
Libraries help recruit volunteers, donors, and other program supporters			1
Libraries are a source of job referral to our literacy students			1

respondees report that their staff are paid less than their education counterparts in non-library programs, while an additional 9% are paid less than equivalent library personnel.

In other words, **salary inequities exist in three of every five programs.**

That library literacy staff remain on the job as long as they do given this major disincentive is both amazing and admirable.

programs' think state libraries do less to help them than the state libraries themselves indicate they do.

For example, 50% of local programs say that state libraries regularly provide state advocacy services. But in LAPD 9, the corresponding state library response is 81%. For policy development and planning, the respective percentages are 8% and 53%! For professional staff development, they are 25% and 53%.

There are similar variations in the areas of national advocacy, state-wide conferencing, program and curriculum development, and evaluation and assessment.

In short, the state library role appears to be very much more extensive than Table LP 12 shows. The strong difference in the perception of the two groups is alarming, once again signalling poor communications and information flow between the two levels.

In any case, if local programs are to continue to offer anything resembling effective instruction and outreach, the state library agencies may well need to do more in the future, especially if the SLRC role is diminished.

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### **PROBLEMS & DIFFICULTIES IN THE LIBRARY CULTURE**

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A final area of questioning in this sec-

tion looked at the advantages and difficulties that local library literacy programs experience specifically because they operate within a library culture.

Table LC 2 reveals some of the problems— from the perspective of the local programs alone.

**Trouble competing for local education funds is the most-cited difficulty.**

Inadequate community understanding and lack of recognition and acceptance by traditional education sources are among the principal reasons for this handicap.

Compensation problems are a very close second. Some 47% of the

**Low status in the eyes of non-literacy library staff also stands as a significant problem.**

About 31% of the programs report this as a constraint, which may explain in part the problem of lower pay.

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### **ADVANTAGES & OPPORTUNITIES IN THE LIBRARY CULTURE**

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Table LC 1 explores the opportunities and advantages (or freedoms and creativity) that library literacy programs enjoy because they operate within a library culture— according to state library literacy professionals, SLRC heads, and the local programs themselves.

As the table shows, libraries are seen as inviting and supportive learning environments for a whole host of reasons.

Among the top advantages is that **libraries provide an immense variety of free resources**—books, video and audio materials, access to small and complex technology, quality space, trained and knowledgeable staff, and

other organizational supports. Individual programs of instruction located outside libraries could not afford such a rich accumulation of teaching and learning materials.

Equally important, **libraries provide an inviting, non-threatening, stigma-free environment that is respectful of adult learners.** They are

friendly settings, where students are constantly surrounded by peers and other library users who have a shared love of and respect for reading and learning, where knowledge is quietly celebrated, and where on a daily basis people gain and enhance control of their own lives through the ready acquisition of knowledge and information.

Befitting the non-traditional instructional approaches used and the clientele served by library literacy programs, **libraries by their very nature provide needed flexibility.** Library hours are longer and year-round, making it possible for literacy classes and activities to be scheduled more frequently and at convenient times. Because libraries are subject to fewer regulations than traditional education institutions, class size, teacher qualifications, and program content and methodology can be more freely customized to actual need. And programs can easily be redirected or adjusted if they are found wanting.

The quiet library environment is naturally conducive to learning. It is a trusted and safe haven, a very important issue in large urban areas. Its closeness to home and work makes it easy to get to, and its credibility and prestige in the community rubs off on the literacy program within.

Libraries are also seen by many of the respondents as comfortable environments for the whole family, an **ideal setting for intergenerational activities.** Indeed,

**LC2. Please indicate which if any of the following problems your library literacy program has because it operates within a library culture. [Q4]**

Q4 Local Programs (58 of 63, 92%)

Trouble competing for local education funds	48%
Lower pay than outside education counterparts	47
Low status in eyes of non-literacy library staff	31
Lack of top management support	19
Recruiting difficulties	17
Lower pay than other library personnel	9
No problems	14
Other (please specify):	29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need more Board involvement.</li> <li>Concern about future funding.</li> <li>Lack of class space.</li> <li>Fundraising must be coordinated with other library fundraising priorities.</li> <li>Not associated with educational institution.</li> <li>Lack of full funding and staff.</li> <li>Limited in scope because of budget and space.</li> <li>Literacy regarded as a “sidebar” service in times of tight money.</li> <li>Purchase of materials must compete with other library needs.</li> <li>Public thinks we’re funded by the City.</li> <li>Short-term planning on part of library.</li> <li>Lack respect of trained educational providers: “You librarians don’t know pedagogy.”</li> <li>Overcrowding.</li> <li>Non-readers don’t want to enter <i>the</i> City reading institution, thus extensive public relations needed.</li> <li>Library “staff” sometimes worries more about library’s rules than customers’ needs.</li> </ul>	

numerous indicators in this study show a strong and growing interest in family literacy programming among the public libraries involved.

Many other advantages and opportunities are cited in the table as well, some very thought-provoking indeed. For example, the inner-city location of many public libraries give adult literacy students exposure to a great variety of cultural resources...students learn tolerance and understanding through exposure to people of diverse background and viewpoint... libraries give literacy programs a direct line to a wide range of potential clients...and library patrons are a ready source of volunteers.

Obviously, the advantages an adult literacy program has because it operates within the library culture are substantial and varied. They far outweigh the problems summarized above, problems that stand as a challenge to caring libraries and political entities, not as an indictment of the programs.

Taken together with the purposes and goals expressed at the start of

this section, these benefits make it clear that library literacy programs are unlike any other, and that either on their own or in partnership with voluntary and CBO groups, public libraries are providing a vital and unduplicated service to hundreds of thousands of adults in literally thousands of communities across the country. In fact, in some communities, they appear to be the only source of adult basic skills help.

Library literacy programs provide better service because they can draw on the resources and attitudes of the library culture, but more than that, they *give back* immense benefits—to the libraries, to students and families, and to their communities, states, and the nation. Everyone benefits from their presence.

## 7: LIFEBLOOD ISSUES & LEADERSHIP

This final strand of the survey sought to give the respondents an opportunity to express *in their own words* what they believe most needs to be done to preserve and strengthen the adult literacy movement generally (Q3) and to protect and strengthen the role of public libraries in particular (Q1, Q2, Q4). The importance of the section lies not so much in what it adds by way of new information—although some is given—as in its underscoring of the findings and analysis of Sections 1 to 6.

In G1, the responses of the two state library groups (Q1, Q2) and of the local programs (Q4) are organized on a state-by-state basis rather than by category as has been done throughout the report. The intent is to give readers interested in state differences a way to spot easily some of the more obvious variations. Except for minor editing refinements, the responses are given here verbatim and in their entirety. This makes a very long table (17 pages), but it should be a useful and self-

contained resource around which to hold future planning discussions.

In G1 the participants were asked what half dozen or so vital issues or problems they think most need attention at the national and state levels. As a matter of secondary importance, they were also asked where they would look for leadership help.

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### SECURING LIBRARY LITERACY SERVICES: CONSENSUS ISSUES

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The table is a solid reinforcement of the recurrent themes and findings discussed throughout this report. For example, the need for stable funding is uppermost in nearly everyone's thoughts.

And over and over again respondents call for more publicity on the important and unique role of public libraries...for increased involvement of state librarians and library personnel in all state and national literacy planning (including workforce and workplace literacy)...for steps to assure equity in

**G1. If the role of public libraries as literacy service providers is to be preserved and strengthened, what half dozen or so vital issues/problems do you think most need attention at the national and state levels? (To whom would you most look for leadership in addressing these issues/problems?)** [Q1, Q2, Q4]

Q1	State Librarians (27 of 35, 77%)
Q2	State Library Literacy Contacts (28 of 44, 64%)
Q4	Local Programs (53 of 63, 84%)

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#### Arkansas

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Q1	Funding to provide space and staff to support library-based literacy programs. Funding for technology—especially for rural libraries. Eliminating barriers to public school-public library literacy cooperatives. Establishing library-votech-industry cooperatives for adult literacy. Establishing purchasing cooperatives for library literacy materials to reduce costs. <i>(State and national government, state literacy organizations, U.S. and state education departments. Need a task force on the state level with at least half of the membership of English-speaking and non-English-speaking persons having completed literacy training.)</i>
Q4	<u>Literacy Council of Hot Spring County, Hot Spring County Library</u> Continuation of library loan collections <i>(AR State Library)</i> Literacy council and library shelves. <i>(State Library staff)</i> Library/literacy relationships strengthened in every county. <i>(Address at county, regional, and state levels)</i> Avoid block grants. <i>(Update and contact legislators at local and state levels.)</i> Cut back of standards and measures set up for fully staffed (paid) adult education programs. Small literacy programs have 1-2 paid staff, all others volunteer.  <u>AR River Valley Libraries for Literacy - Reading Together, AR River Valley Regional Library</u> Recognize that library has responsibility for supporting literacy. Direct role of librarian as educator. Public recognition of the need for funding.

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#### California

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Q2	LSCA VI helped many small libraries begin modest adult literacy programs, which then transitioned to large-scale CLC.
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funding...for more collaboration, new kinds of partnering, and sharing of resources...for identifying effective program models ...for advocacy and awareness activities...for better record keeping and data collection...and for technical assistance help of all kinds.

**POTPOURRI OF OTHER WORTHY IDEAS**

But threaded throughout the already established “consensus” issues are an array of general and specific suggestions which, though mentioned only once by individual respondents, make a good deal of sense. They are distilled below to draw attention to them:

- ◆ To reduce costs, cooperatives should be established for the purchase of materials.
- ◆ To secure the future, long-term strategies should be developed, with built-in benchmarks for measuring progress.
- ◆ To assure access, childcare and transportation needs will have to be better met.
- ◆ Standards and measures set up for well-staffed larger programs

should not be rigidly applied to small library literacy programs that rely on volunteers and have few paid staff. The burden could break their backs.

◆ In schools and colleges of library and information science across the country, increased attention should be given to adult literacy in the training of librarians.

◆ Research should be carried out to answer the question: What works in adult literacy programs, and what doesn't?

◆ A paid literacy coordinator, on at least a part-time basis, should be mandated for every public library in the country.

◆ Seminars of all kinds are needed, on how to build community understanding and support...get the most “bang for the buck”... get library trustees and directors to better understand and commit to the library's adult literacy mission...develop more supportive attitudes among librarians and library staff toward literacy programs... and get educational entities to more fully

(cont'd on p. 105)

**Table G1 cont'd**

LSCA VI also provided important supplemental funds after year 5, which were included in base for state matching.  
 AEA funds have increasingly supplemented CLC funding, but have been relatively small.  
*(Both of the LSCA functions are greatly needed to assure strong federal/state complementation/partnership. Increased funding and access to it by CLC libraries would be very valuable.)*

Q4 Adult Literacy Program, Napa City County Library Funding.

Adult Literacy Program, Alameda County Library, Fremont  
 A concerted effort to incorporate a discussion about literacy services in library schools to ensure that librarians understand the role of library literacy.  
 Strong state advocacy.  
 Serious discussion about the role of volunteers and the need to professionalize the service.  
 Greater voice from the field in the development of policies that affect programs.

Partners in Reading, San Jose Public Library  
 Need a stable source of funding. Too much time is spent searching for \$\$ instead of creating quality programs. Projects are created to impress funders rather than focusing on effective basic services.  
 Need research on what methods work and what don't. A lot of tutoring goes on that generates positive feelings but isn't really effective.  
 Local government needs to understand magnitude of literacy problem so they will be more inclined to fund library literacy programs at a higher level.  
 There hasn't been a national public awareness campaign in quite a while.

Commerce Public Library Adult Literacy Program  
 Funding maintained or increased.  
 Family literacy—bring the parents in with the children.  
*(For leadership: City Council, State Library)*

**Colorado**

Q2 Funding. *(Local programs, legislature, work/employment one-stop centers.)*  
 Publicizing results. *(State office—unless it's gone.)*

Q4 Literacy Program, Mesa County Public Library District  
 Progress of student shown to the public.  
 Funding. *(Anywhere)*

**Table G1, cont'd**

Cooperative service. *(Between ourselves.)*

Transportation in many areas.

Our state library turned literacy and ABE/GED all over to the State Adult Ed Department.

*(Locally our Human Services Council, library board, and business leaders know of the value of our program and the integrity of the staff. I would continue to look to them. Our state literacy coordinator is also very helpful, but her position will close with lack of LSCA funding. The Adult Education Department of the state is also helpful.*

*Cooperative efforts exist between the library, college, school district, and Rocky Mt.-SER.)*

**Delaware**

Q1 Provide national and state funding to support library-based literacy programs.

Q2 We need to be clear that libraries are critical because they provide access to information.  
We may convince more decision makers of the implications of library use and literacy if we begin modeling information literacy skills for preschoolers.  
*(The American Library Association could provide leadership.)*

Q4 Project Reads: Sussex County Literacy Council, Sussex County Department of Libraries  
Recognition that learning to read is really important even with technology becoming the be-all and end-all.  
Recognition that libraries do indeed have a place in the education of adults.  
Evaluation tools and measures cannot be the same as ABE/GED measures.  
Recognition that not all people want to learn to read to become employed.

**Florida**

Q1 It is not a problem for Florida libraries on the state level. However, it is an issue in other states and on the national level where libraries are not included in appropriate studies, funding decisions, and public awareness programs, and where libraries are not included in ABE and ESL policy and decision-making boards, steering committees, consortia boards, etc.  
*(The ALA, Library Programs of the Department of Education)*

Q2 There will always be state library support for public library involvement in literacy in Florida.  
Nationally, libraries need to always be one of the significant agencies included in all national research, marketing/public relations, and funding initiatives. Libraries also need to be included on all top level policy and decision making boards that address literacy education issues.  
Promotion/marketing of libraries as viable alternative locations for learning to take place needs to be consistent, high quality, and ongoing.  
*(Primary leadership should come from the ALA as the national professional association, and Library Programs of the U.S. Department of Education. Secondary and/or joint partnership leadership should come from the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, the Attorney General's Office (crime nationwide as it relates to the lack of employability skills, education, etc.), the Department of Labor, etc.)*

Q4 Project LEAD, Miami-Dade Public Library System  
Publicity is a major issue.

Panhandle Library Literacy Consortium, Jefferson County Public Library  
Public libraries should receive funding from DOE if we are going to service the schools.  
It should be mandated that libraries have at least a half-time literacy coordinator paid by county to ensure continuance of programs.

Hillsborough Literacy Council, Tampa-Hillsborough County Library System  
Funding. *(State Library)*  
Publicity. *(Local media)*  
Recruitment of volunteers. *(Every agency with direct public contact.)*

Literacy Program, Brevard County Library  
It is imperative that public libraries be given access to federal grant monies for use by library-based literacy programs. Having to compete with local ABE programs for funding is not productive for either.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Each One, Teach One, Broward County Public Library

Funding available to libraries only.

Some structure outside the Department of Education that oversees allocation of funds to volunteer, grassroots, and library programs regardless of whether they do it the way the Department of Education does.

More emphasis on various approaches, less on numbers.

More focus on student needs and perceptions.

Center for Adult Learning, Jacksonville Public Libraries

How to get the most “bang for the buck.” How can the dollars we do get be used to help the most people?

We must try to get more local funding through the local city government. If we continue to be funded with “soft” money we will always be in danger of having to close our doors.

More attention within our state library association to literacy issues. (I have not attended the state library association conference for the last several years because there were no literacy-related issues on the program.)

More awareness campaigns need to be carried out within public libraries.

Within each public library when roles are being discussed, someone must speak out for literacy. The public library is a lifelong learning center in the fullest sense of the word. We must become advocates for the 23% of our adult population who are functionally illiterate.

*(On the national level I would look to the American Library Association for leadership. On the state level, the State Library and the Florida Literacy Coalition have been very effective. Locally, the Friends of the Library as well as the library board should be the leaders. There are other local groups, such as the local Laubach group, who count on the library for some services and should be willing advocates if called upon.)*

**Georgia**

Q4 Learning Center, Athens-Clarke County Public Library

The State Library will have to commit more than “lip service” to literacy if we are going to make any headway.

Right now, the state emphasis is on technology. They have to be made to realize that technology is a natural tie-in to literacy or vice versa. However, someone will have to make it a priority.

The leadership must recognize that libraries can and do play a major role in solving literacy issues in a community. This requires solid planning and a greater emphasis on advocacy and promotion.

Libraries must have access to adequate funding if they are to continue to play a pivotal role in literacy.

*(Public library leadership is essential.)*

Literacy Program, DeKalb County Public Library

Increased funding at all levels.

Increased recognition by library leaders (directors, trustees, etc.) and by many libraries of the importance of library literacy services.

Higher level of cooperation among all literacy agencies/organizations to present a united voice.

Accountability/measurement of outcomes.

Need for library representation on any boards, such as the proposed Workforce Development Boards, that will make decisions on allocation of funds.

Educating decision makers—governor and staff, legislators, county commissioners, congressional leaders—to the value of literacy programs not directly connected to employment.

*(Leadership: local literacy coalitions, our governor for whom literacy is a priority, state library agency, GA Office of Adult Literacy, GA Library Association, GA State University Center for Adult Literacy and other literacy research centers, the ALA, National Center for Family Literacy, NIFL, Schools of Library and Information Science, NCLE, AAACE.)*

**Hawaii**

Q1 [Recognition that] libraries are neutral facilities in communities.

[Recognition that libraries are ideal settings] for teaching and learning, for preschoolers, in-school youth, adults, and senior citizens.

[Recognition that] libraries provide hardware and software and network access.

[Appreciation] of fact that libraries mean stability.

**Iowa**

Q1 Recognition of the potential value of libraries as “community centers” for literacy services.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Additional funds to support these additional services.  
Increased value of libraries and library services.  
More staff training.  
Promotion of libraries as centers for lifelong learning.

- Q2 Publicizing the plight of the non-reader.  
New adult reader support groups.  
Expanding volunteer programs in libraries.  
Expanding new adult reader collections  
Preserving funding for SLRCs.  
*(For leadership: State Department of Education, SLRC)*

**Idaho**

- Q1 Libraries need to be recognized as part of the educational community.  
More resources, including staff, space, and materials.  
More publicity and help in identifying populations who can use these services.  
*(Note: In Idaho, the State Library plans more of a coordinating and consulting role rather than administering an ongoing literacy program. What is needed here is probably a better educational effort as to the role public libraries can play and a coalition-building effort.)*
- Q2 Funding.  
Collaboration.  
Use of technology.

**Illinois**

- Q1 Coordination and education.  
Training.  
Opening state adult education funding to libraries.  
Public libraries and business partnerships.  
Computers.  
*(We are ready to continue to offer leadership from the state library. If not, a coalition of business, educational leaders, and others will be most helpful in our future efforts. We are concerned that on the national level the philosophical differences between literacy providers, educators, and some librarians still need to be addressed. In the meantime, we expect states and local communities to build on what we have been able to achieve in Illinois and we will continue our commitment regardless of money, but the shift will be to support rather than actual dollars at the state and local level.)*
- Q2 Building better communications between librarians and educators for more unified approach to literacy enhancement.  
Better training for libraries and community organizations in program development, evaluation and accountability, and establishing standards and measures.  
Open state adult education funding to libraries—in partnership with educators if that's the only alternative.  
Developing workplace literacy components and resources by libraries.  
Providing increased access to computers and available technology for literacy students.  
*(Leadership: I would look to an Interagency Coordinating Committee such as we have to address these issues. National organizations need to work together on solutions.)*
- Q4 LVA-Elgin, Gail Borden Public Library  
Sufficient funding.  
Qualified staff.  
Sufficient number of volunteers.  
Public awareness of issues.  
Community support.  
Support from outside personnel (e.g. board members, service clubs, etc.)  
*(Leadership: Secretary of State Literacy Office)*



*Table G1, cont'd*

**Indiana**

Q1 There has to be a “consolidation” of effort in programming.  
Research of more practical impact of literacy vs. cost of illiteracy on our society economically and socially.  
Continued emphasis on marketing importance of literacy.  
Recruitment of more partners stating the urgency of a literate America from industry, service clubs and nonprofits, and foundations.  
Even greater emphasis on what a single individual can do to change the effects on another’s life, thus the community, and eventually the world. Worker to worker, convict to convict, not just teacher to student. We are all teachers and students all the time.  
Develop more tools and techniques to teach in group settings via Distance Education, etc.

Q2 Help in determining what works, successful practices, model coalitions, technology, etc.  
Public education and public relations.  
More literacy student involvement in planning, etc.  
Continued cooperation between organizations at the national and state level.

Q4 Literacy Program, Michigan City Public Library  
Support of library literacy services by local and state library administrators, to include not just funding but provision of qualified personnel and also moral support and encouragement.  
Professional education of library literacy program administrators in the fields of literacy, adult education, reading, or education, so that they can be held in the same esteem as a professionally educated librarian.  
Widening the scope of library literacy programs to include services for children as well as adults. Too many children fall through the cracks at school.  
Cooperation between other library personnel and library literacy programs personnel in areas of publicity, public awareness, recruitment, etc.  
Adequate funding for materials, equipment, clerical assistance.  
*(Local and state library officials would need to address the above issues, and perhaps the state education department.)*

Library Literacy Program, Anderson Public Library  
Funding.  
Support on all levels.  
The general public needs to understand that the problem still exists and that volunteerism can help.  
Literacy providers continue to need answers about how to help with specific problems such as learning disabilities, dyslexia, apathy, etc.  
Keeping adult education and literacy programs off the cutting block. People still need us.  
Accountability. How can we really prove we have an impact on people’s lives? Do statistics really mean anything?  
*(Frankly, I don’t know who to ask for help with my concerns. I’m going just about anywhere I can—the State Library, Internet, books of lists of funders through foundations, other providers.)*

Knox County Literacy Program, Knox County Public Library  
Money for personnel, training, and staffing adequate to address program needs.  
Illiterate people are very often unaware that they have problems and need help, and never approach us for service.  
*(For help: Local and community foundations, first; regional and state philanthropic organizations, second; government at all levels, third. Community/county volunteers and media, especially non-print.)*

**Kansas**

Q2 Money is the main issue of contention and competition.  
Money to do the work is the only issue: research, best practices, sharing opportunities, and ongoing training.  
*(Leadership needs to be shared between traditional adult education, community based programs (libraries), and other agencies and organizations. LVA and LLA have the vision to bring the players together at a Literacy Summit.)*

**Table G1, cont'd**

- Q4 Project Finish, Johnson County Library, Shawnee Mission  
Community partnerships between libraries and educational institutions, community centers, etc., need to be encouraged as a means of maximizing literacy services to the community.  
Additional funding sources need to be located in order to maintain and improve existing programs.  
Staff and volunteer tutor training needs to be maintained.

**Kentucky**

- Q1 Funding. (*Legislature*)  
Models of service. (*Department of Education*)  
Standards of service. (*Department of Education, ALA, National Coalition*)  
Training for fundraisers. (*Department of Education*)  
Publicity. (*Department of Education*)

**Massachusetts**

- Q2 Better examination and dissemination of what works.  
Technical assistance for library programs, including how to do collaboration, grant writing, and conflict resolution.  
Ways to address turf issues.  
A greater presence of library-based programs at national ABE conferences like COABE and support to attend them. (If a librarian is allowed one out-of-state trip it is usually to an LLA or LVA conference. They cannot travel without funds.)  
We still need to raise the issue/value of library-based literacy to the library community and we need to begin to clean house at home first!
- Q4 Center for New Americans, Jones Library  
ESL literacy: Many providers will not accept ESL students who are not literate already and many providers need training in how to teach these students.  
Equity issues: We can't expect to hold on to good teachers and volunteer coordinators if they make less than half of what public school teachers make!!!  
(Whole) staff education: Our entire library staff here has been wonderful in assisting and welcoming students to the library. But other libraries/library workers can be rather daunting to limited English speakers/newcomers. It is critical that *all library workers* know how to deal with newcomers with sensitivity and compassion.  
Qualifications: Coordinators, teachers, and volunteer trainers must be ABE professionals, not librarians. They must have adult education credentials/experience and be paid accordingly.
- Newcomer Family Literacy Project, Lawrence Public Library  
Facilities development (construction money).  
Technology acquisitions.  
Staff development—train staff to use new technologies, train staff about new literacy resources available.  
Improve relations with public education system.  
More literacy volunteers.  
(*We would look to the School Department, State DOE, SABES (MA State System for Adult Basic Education Support), congressional leaders, the President.*)
- Literacy Program, Thomas Crane Public Library  
A more tolerant, less exclusive educational philosophy at state and federal levels must drive policy issues that affect funding and instructional opportunity.  
Learning disabilities and ADD are critical issues in the success of students and the choice of curriculum or instructional material.  
More people who provide direct service to adult learners need to be more familiar with technology in order to instruct and develop programs.  
(*The educational community working with public libraries would provide the greatest leadership on literacy.*)

Table G1, cont'd

**Maryland**

- Q4 Project Literacy, Howard County Library  
Validation from the state level of the importance of literacy in public library's mission given shrinking funding for libraries in general.  
Continued availability of funding for the external high school diploma program.  
More publicity on the scope of the U.S. literacy problem and its economic implications. At one point literacy was in the long-range goals for libraries in Maryland. Three years ago, after the White House Conference on Libraries denied literacy as one of the major goals, many local programs lost their literacy funding. Our State Library System supported a multi-million dollar "Lifelong Learning Library" at the Enoch Pratt Free Library. It is now a "regular" branch. Two other counties have limited literacy programs supported "in-kind" by their libraries.

**Michigan**

- Q1 Adult literacy is just one of the needs that public libraries in Michigan need to address in the coming years, while funding for the daily operation of many public libraries is already inadequate.  
At the state level, continue to encourage coordination and involved support among academic, library, volunteer, and education groups.  
Continue to seek private sector grants and gifts. (*Library of Michigan Foundation*)  
Adult education programs should remain a responsibility of local and state government, while volunteer literacy programs must be community-based. State, federal, and foundation funds should be supplemental to community funding of literacy services.  
Publicize successful programs and assist with planning, coordination, and fundraising. (*State and national leaders*)  
Emphasize fundraising, reporting, and fund management as well as literacy training. (*Literacy organizations*)  
Coordination, planning and promotion, assigning of grant funds as available. (*State libraries*)  
Funding should be competitive or discretionary, tied to specific projects. (*State and federal government*)
- Q4 MARC Literacy Program, Greenville Public Library  
Guidelines for training volunteers as a high level of instruction is maintained by all literacy programs across the state. (*Michigan Literacy Inc.*)  
Designate funds specifically for library literacy services separate from other adult education funds or workplace education. (*Libraries and the U.S. Department of Education*)  
Advocacy. (*National Institute for Literacy, LVA, and Laubach*)

**Minnesota**

- Q1 Organization of literacy services is different in each state, but ongoing partnerships need to be continued. (*The state library agencies, state adult ed/GED/ESL office(s) plus state-level direct providers.*)  
Educators and policymakers need to be continuously reminded of the roles of public libraries in adult literacy efforts. (*National organizations*)  
Much more support must come from businesses. Too many complain about low skill levels in the workforce while only a few seem willing to invest in their workers. (*Business and industry*)
- Q2 What's literacy? Clear definition of literacy is needed.  
What's the literacy message? Consistent statement and widespread communication needed.  
What is the purpose of the library? Definition, message, communication.  
What is the citizen's responsibility? How does the citizen understand their connection and what they ought to do?  
What long-term strategies are needed?  
(*The only leadership that is worth anything in the long-run comes from thoughtful, committed, persistent people.*)
- Q4 Franklin Learning Center, Franklin Community Library, Minneapolis Public Library  
Libraries need to recognize literacy learning center services are essential. They are also a great outreach and marketing tool, especially when some libraries are wondering why circulation is dwindling.  
Libraries could take the lead regarding information highway access.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Adequate staffing.  
Adequate collection financing.  
Adequate facilities.  
Public relations.

Linking Libraries & Literacy for Lifelong Learning, Lexington Branch Library, St. Paul

Any stability in funding with block grants or programs would enable us to plan more effectively for the future. This is probably an impossible dream given the nature of federal, state, and local funding. Not losing the funding for basic literacy materials and services with the rush to use technology effectively. Technology can be very helpful but we still need basic materials for new adult readers, GED test study guides, audiocassettes for those who know Hmong and are learning English, etc. This needs to come from all levels.

Any ways to increase staffing to cope with the increased demand for time-intensive services to new readers and immigrants in our community. This is a local budget issue with lobbying needed by Friends and advocacy groups to inform government officials.

*(Leadership: ALA, PLA, Adult Lifelong Learning Sections has been invaluable for me in providing collection assistance, personal contacts throughout the country, ideas for programs or problem-solving, etc. They have provided a strong leadership role and information for ALA's legislative network for lobbying.)*

**Missouri**

Q2 Libraries' role in providing library literacy services needs to be emphasized. *(American Library Association)*  
Continuation of statewide programs. *(Missouri Library Association and State Library).*

**Mississippi**

Q1 Coordination of literacy programs.  
Communication concerning literacy opportunities and resources.  
Increased emphasis on family literacy.  
Promotion of all library services to the community as a whole.  
Meeting childcare and transportation needs of adult learners.  
*(Some of the needs could be addressed by using one-time grants to establish or enhance local literacy programs. Local funds should be sought to continue the programs.)*

**North Carolina**

Q4 Community of Readers, Glenwood Library  
Staff training.  
Public awareness.  
More collaboration with other agencies.  
Coordinated fund raising.  
Technology!

**North Dakota**

Q1 Delivery problems in rural areas.  
Q2 Training for rural/small library staff who are mostly untrained in librarianship itself.

**Nebraska**

Q1 We have some excellent programs and leadership in place now. We would rather promote those efforts in a support role than initiate programs from our office. We do not have the resources to assume a leadership role in library literacy programs, due to many other commitments, not to lack of interest. In part this relates to other agencies and organizations which are leading literacy efforts. The best results occur due to local efforts. *(National and state organizations need to direct their attention to helping local organizations in literacy programs.)*

**Table G1, cont'd**

**Q4** Platte Valley Literacy Association, Columbus Public Library  
 In our state the majority of literacy programs are sponsored by the state-funded adult basic education through the community colleges. The libraries do not play a large role in out-state Nebraska. In order to strengthen the library literacy services, and in order [to avoid] duplicate programs, the libraries and community college ABE coordinators must work together. In many communities there is the opinion that there is not a need for adult literacy assistance. What many people do not realize is that literacy levels which were acceptable 20 years ago no longer meet the needs of industry and our computerized society.  
 Workplace literacy must be supported in some way by the community's industry. At the present time in Columbus, our on-site literacy classes are free of charge to industry, unless they request more instructor time than we have budgeted. In that case, we provide materials and the teacher at their site, and they pay a flat salary to us for the instructor.  
 Our state senators will have a larger role in designating funds in the future. We must request that they visit our programs, listen to our needs, and realize that literacy is an important part of making our citizens self-sufficient.  
 We are working hard to educate our community about what PVLA is about. We hope to see positive results in support through volunteerism and donations.

**New Hampshire**

**Q1** Statistical studies to show the value of these programs.  
 General education to the public about libraries and literacy programs.  
 Communication with non-library literacy providers about the advantage of libraries as literacy providers and literacy partners.  
Funding!!!

**New Jersey**

**Q1** The important support role of many public libraries needs to be recognized and stronger publicity in the community needs to bring attention to this service and highlight the public library as a supporting agency.

**Q4** Basic Skills for Reading & ESL, Elizabeth Public Library  
 Vital issues are funds for training and matching tutors with learners, and payment to tutor trainers for running the literacy program. Generally speaking, writing to legislators brings a response to any questions and comments.

Literacy for Non-English Speakers, Paterson Free Public Library  
 Funding.  
 Personnel.  
 Training.  
 Technology.  
 Partnerships with other organizations, school system, and businesses.  
 Commitment to literacy, particularly family literacy.  
 Support from local, state, and federal governments.  
 Increase awareness of literacy's importance on local, state, and national level.  
 Provide sufficiently trained personnel to work in library literacy programs.

**New Mexico**

**Q2** Development of planning/assessment skills at the local level so that local librarians can determine literacy training needs and the role their library should play.

**Nevada**

**Q1** Legislation authorizing/endorsing.  
 Funding earmarked for libraries.  
 High awareness of library role.

**Table G1, cont'd**

**New York**

Q2      Accountability: Libraries are generally a step removed from being able to assess student accomplishments. Decreased library funding in general. Libraries have other important missions as well as literacy. Literacy is labor intensive. Programs will face cuts.  
Lack of record keeping. Libraries could benefit from accurately counting adult learner use or working with direct literacy providers whose students use the library. There is more literacy activity than librarians are aware of.  
Legislation on the state and federal level that includes libraries.

Q4      Library Literacy Center of Prendergast Library, Jamestown  
Better use of available funding (there may not be any new funding).  
Within our state department of education designate and maintain a commitment of a certain portion of state education income to be used for library services. (*Board of Regents*)  
Re-establish the liaison link between the state library and local libraries.  
Local libraries should develop other sources of funding and try to minimize dependence on state and federal sources.

Literacy Program, Brooklyn Public Library

State needs to look at progress made in library literacy programs.  
Ability of libraries to attract adults who are gainfully employed but wish to better themselves.

Centers for Reading and Writing, New York Public Library

Having library literacy programs eligible for educational funding sources other than those specifically designated for library literacy programs.  
Library leadership needs to raise public awareness about library literacy programs and publicly support continued and expanded funding specifically for literacy.  
The accomplishments of library literacy programs need to be documented and disseminated.  
Library literacy programs need to be able to quickly adapt to the changes in the literacy community and restructure programs in order to meet the needs of the clients in areas such as welfare reform, workfare, and job training.  
Professional educators need to be included in the design and implementation of library literacy programs.  
There needs to be a partnership between librarians and adult literacy educators.  
(*Leadership and direction: Needs to be provided by local library directors, the state librarian, and professional librarian organizations such as ALA, PLA, and NYLA in partnership with local literacy education directors, State Education Departments, and national education organizations such as IRA and NCAL*)

**Ohio**

Q1      Emphasis on literacy as a primary function of libraries.  
Emphasis on cooperative ventures which involve schools/libraries.  
Stronger emphasis on schools teaching children to read, giving them special help to achieve this goal. (*State library agency, state education agency*)  
Training for library staff interested in literacy projects.  
Family literacy as a desired program.  
More opportunities for providers to have exchanges of information. (*Professional organizations*)

**Oklahoma**

Q2      Stable funding resources. More partnerships to this end. (*ALA, LLA, other national organizations*)  
Continuing publicity for library literacy programs; organize a publicity campaign similar to Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS). (*ALA, LVA, Laubach, Center for the Book, PBS*)  
State and local programs need to speak with a unified voice.  
Professionalism of volunteers. Help is needed getting the word out that volunteer literacy tutors are providing a valuable service and are "professional." Too often there is wide separation between professional educators and volunteer programs.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Record keeping and accountability. Determine a common reporting form, make the forms available, and report the results separately and combined so that the impact of library and volunteer community-based programs is known.

*(Laubach and LVA)*

Q4 Moore Literacy Council, Cleveland County Library

Outreach is our most pressing problem. There are still areas of Oklahoma that do not have any literacy programming at this time. If our State Literacy Resource Center is affected by the block grant issue, it will directly affect the start-up of new programs and the extended life of small, underfunded programs.

Great Plains Literacy Council, Southern Prairie Library System

Provide funding for a state-level literacy office to receive and diffuse issues and information.

Continue funding for tutor training.

Continue the SLRCs. They have been invaluable in compiling information.

Provide research and development in adult learning theories and teaching practices.

Continue the ESL tutoring/teaching program development.

Literacy Council of LeFlore County, Buckley Public Library

More cooperation between the State Department of Education and volunteer library-based literacy providers.

Recognition from state education departments of the success rate of and effectiveness of volunteer groups. Some form of continuing financial support for literacy providers to provide for ongoing and continuing literacy efforts.

Recognition that achieving literacy skills carries implications beyond the purely economic or work-related skills.

*(We currently look toward the OK Department of Libraries which provides strong, ongoing support for library literacy programs. The OK Literacy Coalition, a state-wide volunteer organization of literacy providers also provides resources, training, and support. Would like to see greater support from the State Department of Education, state government, and national literacy organizations such as Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of America.)*

**Oregon**

Q1 We have taken a good run at fostering library involvement in adult literacy programs over the past decade or so. Perhaps it is now time for these local projects to sink or swim on their own. I am more interested in seeing public libraries strengthen programs for illiteracy prevention as opposed to remediation. Public libraries can do more to impact literacy by working with preschoolers, their parents, and their caregivers. This is where we are currently putting our emphasis in Oregon.

Q2 Envision and promote the library's role in literacy services provision. *(NCLIS, Center for the Book, Department of Education, ALA, state library associations, state libraries)*  
Preserve funding for literacy tutoring programs. *(State Department of Education staying on top of federal and state funding proposals that affect literacy funding)*  
Effective testimony from students, tutors, and programs.  
Fulfillment of National Education Goals. If schools were successfully graduating students who learned to read and compute math, libraries may not need to preserve their literacy role. *(U.S. Department of Education, State Department of Education, state legislature for funding of schools)*  
Encourage corporate donations/funding to volunteer tutoring programs. *(NCLIS, Center for the Book, Department of Education, ALA, national volunteer literacy organizations)*  
More to prevent the need for literacy services by targeting library services on children and youth. *(Libraries)*  
Encourage more library-daycare outreach, library-Head Start partnerships, library-parent contacts and family literacy programs in libraries. *(NCLIS, Center for the Book, U.S. Department of Education, ALA, state library associations, state libraries, state legislature)*

Q4 LEARN Project, Eugene Public Library

Continued improvement in training for BOTH paid staff and volunteers.

Continued improvement in books, materials, hardware and software.

Provision of resources to instructors, volunteer tutors, and students.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Space for teaching.  
Addressing learning problems.  
Recognition of volunteer efforts.  
*(Leadership: Libraries need to be a part of leadership. OCCS-Oregon Literacy Inc. Professional organizations for funded and volunteer programs. Schools, businesses, vocational, rehab, employment, welfare, and corrections agencies.)*

**Pennsylvania**

- Q1 Need funding for collection development and technology to support the work of literacy providers.  
*(At the state level, the Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, the PA State Coalition for Adult Literacy, and the PA Association for Adult Continuing Education)*
- Q4 Reader Development Program, Free Library of Philadelphia  
Coordination: There is not a sense that each participating institution has a unique role under the guidance of the state library or state literacy agency.  
Duplication: As a result of the above, there is unnecessary duplication of services. This should be eliminated in the interests of economic and bureaucratic accountability.  
Funds: Technology costs \$\$\$\$\$. Even the paperback books purchased by RDP are increasingly expensive: \$8.72 is the average price per book in 1995; in 1993, the average price was \$5.67.  
*(Leadership: One very effective group that provides leadership is the National Literacy Alliance Public Policy Listserv. Besides delivering information on literacy legislation, policy, and funding, it functions as a "call to action" when intervention is warranted. The messages relating to the Congressional budget hearings inspired even this passive participant to write to PA's senators and representatives to inform them of the impact of reduced adult literacy funding on their constituents.)*
- Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program, Bradford County Library  
Funding.  
Public awareness.  
Use of technology.  
Student recruitment.  
Increased awareness of the value of library literacy programs.  
Awareness that literacy is involved with many other social issues.  
*(Local: Adult education agencies, county government. State: Adult education organizations such as PAACE and Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth, State Director of Adult Basic & Literacy Education, State Legislators. National: Laubach Literacy Action, Literacy Volunteers of America, US Congressional leaders.)*

**Rhode Island**

- Q1 Role of libraries as information providers needs to be more widely understood.  
Role of libraries as centers for lifelong learning at all levels needs to be better understood.  
Libraries themselves need to be more proactive in this area.  
There needs to be much more money assigned at all levels (national, state, local, private, and public) to support adult literacy in public libraries.  
The economic benefits of literacy training (by whatever agencies provide it) need to be understood and recognized.
- Q4 LVA Kent County, Coventry Public Library  
Space for literacy programs in libraries.  
More attention given to family literacy programs.  
More help for tutors in learning how to work with learning disabled adults.  
More research on the extent of adult illiteracy in the U.S. and its measurable effects on families and in the workplace, nationally and statewide.

**South Carolina**

- Q2 Steady, ongoing source of funding for literacy programs.  
Greater advocacy of libraries' role in supporting community literacy efforts.  
Encouraging literacy agencies to use all community resources.



**Table G1, cont'd**

**Q4**     Literacy Program, Greenville County Library

The increasing gap between opportunity-rich and opportunity-poor. In SC, rural areas tend to be even further out of the loop and more underfunded than other areas.

Mistrust between agencies and parts of the state, especially in times of diminishing funds.

*(Leadership: I would leave the state out of it and concentrate my efforts at coalition building among local agencies and the wonderful human resources at the federal level, which exist in people like Judy Stark at Education who is helping us with our grant. I think libraries themselves are the perfect institutions to take the lead — democratic, public, omnipresent. The ALA may already be putting forth leadership efforts. I'm just not aware of it.)*

**South Dakota**

**Q1**     The need for leaders on both state and federal level to realize that illiteracy is an ongoing problem. Funding for short periods of time, 1-3 years then no funding, does not work. It takes 1-3 years just to develop the local programs and begin to reach the adult student. Funding must be continuous just as funding for elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education.

A secure and continuing funding base is required. Illiteracy is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It affects all citizens and impacts our economic growth as a state and a nation.

*(Funding leadership must come from the federal level.)*

**Tennessee**

**Q1**     We would work in a collaboration effort with state adult education leaders. The knowledge and expertise that has developed over a number of years of such collaboration has produced a vast amount of information coming from a number of national organizations. We feel we have an extremely well-informed state group.

**Q2**     The most important issue will be in dealing with personalities of leadership—whether that leadership understands all the issues of an uneducated citizens, whether it has an agenda that is totally informed.

**Texas**

**Q1**     Funding is the major issue—we can't do it without the resources.

Competing priorities are another impediment.

Turf issues are also significant.

*(While libraries can play a key role in addressing adult illiteracy, they are not the only agencies involved. What is needed is a well-coordinated effort that uses the contributions of all involved agencies and organizations effectively—a network of providers. We need leadership to help develop such a collaborative approach.)*

**Q2**     Funding for materials, staff, and training.

Convincing legislators that they have a vested interest in helping reduce illiteracy—educated voters, educated citizens.

Convincing legislators that in small, rurally-isolated communities, there are not enough volunteers to provide literacy and ESL programs. Distance learning would help, funds would help.

Funds for permanent staffing of literacy programs.

Better perception of what literacy programs provide and their value to communities.

**Q4**     LVA-Sterling Municipal Library

Increasing number of adults with ESL needs.

Preserving a stable funding base for volunteer literacy programs.

Educating the public about how illiteracy affects everyone.

Establishing a linkage between library services and literacy services (how each benefits the other).

*(Local government and community groups are now active proponents of literacy services; however, I don't see any real future leaders for literacy on the state/national level.)*

Literacy Center, El Paso Public Library

Staffing - additional staff will be required for new lab.

Funding - for strengthening and updating collections.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Outreach - media campaign for public awareness and to recruit students.  
Volunteers- for individualized instruction.  
Curriculum development - for Hispanic populations.  
Assessment - easy and affordable for student placement.  
*(Leadership: Local: Library Director, City Council, residents, BRLA. State: Legislators, TX State Library, Governor, TLA. National: Congressional leaders, Senator, President, ALA.)*

Literacy Programs, Harris County Public Library

Libraries keeping pace with technology.  
Funding for materials and technology.  
Attracting diverse populations to the library.  
Recognition of libraries as the infrastructure of education.  
*(Texas State Librarian, TX Library Association, TX State Library, knowledgeable legislators on state and national level.)*

Andrews Adult Literacy Program, Andrews Public Library

Funding.  
More trained teachers (paid). Volunteers really work out well, but many are limited in what they can do.  
Legislators need more training—both local and state.

**Utah**

Q4 Bridgerland Literacy, Logan Library

Staff people, especially in outlying areas, need more training and staff development.  
Programs would benefit from more effective instructional approaches.  
More networking and coordination between programs is needed.  
Stable, ongoing funding.

**Vermont**

Q2 In our state, the literacy people in general do not consider libraries as essential to fostering literacy. They consider them resource centers primarily and view programming as secondary or nonessential. Yet public libraries have sponsored a number of fine reading discussion programs and family literacy programs for new adult readers. They have set aside space for tutoring and developed small collections for students.  
The literacy community in the state talks about the need to collaborate with other agencies but often leaves libraries out of the loop. It creates barriers by using acronyms and technical language non-educators do not understand or see reasons to use.  
The best collaborations occur on a small scale and at a very local level. Some librarians have been frustrated by a lack of continuity and commitment on the part of individual tutors. They feel the managers promise increased tutor support but do not always follow through.

**Virginia**

Q4 Literacy Program, Newport News Public Library

The removal of blocked funding from the state. An increase of state funding would allow the literacy program to expand, as well as meet student needs with the necessary materials and resources.

**Washington**

Q2 Recognize library literacy programs as legitimate programs.  
Coordinating with local literacy programs instead of competing.  
Getting the smaller and medium-sized libraries aware of the literacy issues and enthusiastic about developing programs.  
Convincing library directors that literacy should be addressed even though there are budget cuts.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Q4 Project READ, Longview Public Library  
Family literacy needs to be strongly addressed.  
All programs providing services to those in need should be educated in how literacy impacts what each is attempting to do.

Library Literacy Program/Lifelong Learning, Seattle Public Library  
At Seattle Public Library, the future of literacy provision rests with the commitment of the board and the will of our city librarian. Currently there is a strong will.  
We have to fit in with the existing literacy network as a collaborator, not an 800 lb. gorilla.  
We have to educate our staff to best serve this new group of patrons.  
We don't have enough space to provide the service we'd like.  
(We will continue to work within SPL and the local literacy network to address these concerns.)

**West Virginia**

Q1 (The media. Churches. Social agencies. Neighborhood improvement concerns. Local agents for change. Every strand in the community network.)

Q2 Funding is the critical issue library literacy programs face. Libraries are notoriously underfunded. Library-based literacy programs would be difficult to maintain without funds earmarked for literacy.  
Awareness is also an issue. Though problems of illiteracy have been brought to the public eye in recent years, many people do not view it as a problem that affects them personally. Increased awareness of the social and financial aspects of illiteracy may generate an interest in helping combat the problem.  
Awareness that literacy efforts are not a short-term problem or goal. With the scope of the problem, as cited in the National Adult Literacy Survey (42% at the lowest 2 levels of literacy proficiency), this nation needs to commit to long-term solutions. With the literacy awareness efforts of First Ladies (Mrs. Bush and Ms. Rachel Woby, WV, and others) taking on the issue as part of their husbands' terms, I think the public may have thought the problem would disappear in 4-8 years. When several community groups were recently approached to assist in literacy efforts they responded that they already did that and thought the issue was resolved. Literacy will not be resolved as part of a campaign platform or a one-year community project. We must commit to lifelong learning. Early intervention would help at-risk children and adolescents and prevent the increasing number of illiterate adults. Programs where libraries and schools work together to assist in helping children achieve in school that start in the first grade and follow them through as needed is one example. Libraries have found that after school homework and/or tutoring sessions have been very successful. Across the state, a variety of programs are offered that include but are not limited to peer tutoring, resource sharing, tutoring, and any assistance as needed.  
Training for tutors and trainers on a consistent basis. With the constant advances in discoveries in reading disabilities and the possible solutions or methods used, the trainers often feel out of date. However, the cost of attending training sessions nationally is very expensive and often impossible.

Q4 Literacy Program, Monroe County & Peterstown Public Libraries  
Adequate and consistent funding.  
(National leadership. WV Library Commission is very supportive but does not have funds.)

**Wisconsin**

Q1 Most important issue is acceptance and visibility of public libraries as literacy providers vis-a-vis other providers, so non-library providers will include libraries in their literacy planning and implementation. On both the national and state levels, there is a need to advocate the library's role. (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Libraries and Museums, NCLIS, ALA, State Library)  
It would be ideal if libraries were guaranteed a percentage of literacy monies at both the national and state levels, albeit the overall monies would be administered by a different agency, so that interagency cooperation including libraries would be built into the system.  
The other side of the coin is that national and state library leaders need to work continuously at the regional and local levels, helping to create connections at the grassroots level.  
Again, the leadership should be provided by the groups listed above responsible for advocacy.

**Table G1, cont'd**

Q4 LVA Chippea Valley/Eau Claire, L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library  
 Librarians need to realize libraries serve people who have survival needs not just those who read words. Library staff must become more global and embrace partnerships. With everyone looking for measurable outcomes we must work together.  
 Libraries are so governed by rules and regulations, it's difficult for them to see how they can [?] volunteer literacy programs. Perhaps a nationwide staff development project would educate staff about the needs of the adult learner and the trained volunteer.

recognize and support libraries as partners in education and literacy.

- ◆ Public libraries should be represented on all boards for literacy.
- ◆ Activities to educate Congress, governors, state commissioners, legislatures, and other political forces are vital.
- ◆ More partnerships should be forged between public libraries and the business community, and between public libraries and community colleges.
- ◆ For that matter, businesses should provide more financial support for literacy, especially for the upgrading of their own underskilled workers. Their complaints are often not accompanied by action.
- ◆ The resolutions of the American Library Association, the National

Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), and other key national groups should give consistent attention to literacy.

- ◆ A nationwide library literacy staff development effort should be launched.
- ◆ Training is needed in how best to teach ESL students, the learning disabled, and other special populations.
- ◆ The role and effectiveness of volunteers and voluntary programs should be more widely and visibly recognized.
- ◆ A much stronger commitment at the state level is essential.

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**RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEADERSHIP**

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A wide range of state and national groups are named as the appropriate entities to work with

public libraries in providing leadership to preserve and develop the library's adult literacy service role.

Three groups of respondents (Q1, Q2, Q4) would place the heaviest responsibility on the following groups, roughly in the rank order shown:  
**The American Library Association...state libraries and state library associations...federal and state departments of education...the two major voluntary organizations (LVA and Laubach)...and governors, state legislatures, and other agencies of state government.**

Somewhat farther along in line are such groups as state literacy coalitions and SLRCs, state adult literacy offices, and the Center for the Book.

Also mentioned, though less frequently,

the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education, NCLIS, the National Institute for Literacy, schools and colleges of library science, and the National Center for Family Literacy.

Community, regional, and national foundations are cited as well, as are the media and the President.

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**TO SECURE ADULT LITERACY IN GENERAL: THE SLRC LENS**

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In a separate question, SLRC heads were asked in G2 what half dozen or so issues they think most need attention at the national and state levels if *adult literacy services in general* are to be preserved and strengthened.

Like their library counterparts, SLRCs point primarily to several

**G2** *If adult literacy services in your state are to be preserved and strengthened, what half dozen or so vital issues/problems do you think most need attention at the national and state levels? To whom would you most look for leadership in addressing these issues/problems? [Note: This question embraces all of adult literacy, not just library literacy services.]* [Q3, SLRCs]

Q3 SLRCs (29 of 40, 73%)

**Alaska**

Make literacy one of the welfare priorities.  
Guarantee minimum funding for literacy.  
Increase computer use.  
Provide more staff training.  
Hire more full-time literacy instructors.

**Arizona**

Use funding for independent contractors more judiciously.  
*(U.S. Department of Education. In the state, the SEA Office of Adult Education and Literacy and GED Testing Services, SEA/ADE School-to-Work office, Governor's staff on school-to-work, USDE, NIFL)*

**California**

Develop national view of literacy that encompasses workforce but is not totally associated with jobs/work. See literacy as critical family issue with work one aspect.  
Address all literacy in a "family literacy" context.  
More involvement of adult learners in decision-making process.  
*(NIFL could lead the way!)*

**Colorado**

A broader more humanistic philosophy or outlook on education, which encompasses and acknowledges the role of adult education.  
A realization that there is no quick fix, and that job training/placement is not a substitute for basic skills training.  
Respect and support of parents as role models and teachers, and as essential to children's successful literacy acquisition as the K-12 system.  
Adult learners taken seriously as citizens, constituents, voters.

**Hawaii**

More coordination of resources.  
More networking and cooperating.

**Iowa**

Awareness of the issue.  
Stop allowing students to go through K-12 without obtaining literacy skills.  
Require businesses to require literacy skills prior to employment.  
Implement penalties for not achieving—i.e. no driver's license if you can't read.

**Illinois**

In Illinois we have built strong interagency support for literacy as the foundation for success for our residents. The uncertainty of funding in the future has made us look closely at how we work and how we can make the best use of our limited resources. We will be looking closely at technology and distance delivery systems supported through state and local resources which will bring information into all people in a community that can also benefit our literacy clients. The closer to home the funding can be, the more missions and policy match the needs in that home community. We all must make certain that there is an ongoing awareness of those needs and how all benefit from seeing that the needs are met.

**Indiana**

At the state level:  
Produce a comprehensive biennial plan which coordinates literacy policy and program development.

areas of established and obvious need: funding stability...more attention to family literacy... networking and collaboration...advocacy and information dissemination...documentation of successful activities... equal access to funding... more technology use... and other areas.

But their responses also reflect a somewhat different perspective than that of the library groups, and are interesting for the texture they add to the hopper of sensible ideas to consider. For example,

◆ A wider perception of literacy must be developed that includes but is not so narrowly focused on jobs and work.

◆ Adult learners must become more involved in all decision making.

◆ Funding for independent contractors should be used more judiciously.

◆ Block grants and performance standards must not be allowed to kill services to the least educated. Without some effective intervention this is a very real danger.

◆ Economic and workforce development must

be developed hand in hand for both to succeed.

◆ Regional coordinating councils might be looked to as useful planning and leadership mechanisms.

◆ Entrepreneurial activities should be encouraged at the local level.

◆ New ways of working will have to be found—with funding, missions, and policies developed closer to the community level.

◆ Penalties should be implemented for *not* achieving—e.g. if you can't read you won't be issued a driver's license.

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## A “QUICK-FIX” MENTALITY PERSISTS

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One perspective imbedded in many of the responses to G1 and G2 is that adult basic education and literacy continues to be handicapped by a “quick-fix” mentality.

West Virginia's state library literacy professional speaks to this issue as follows:

*[There must be wider awareness that literacy efforts are not a short-term*

### **Table G2, cont'd**

Implement the state's biennial plan through regional coordinating councils to build a seamless learning system.

Encourage local programs to become more entrepreneurial.

Encourage private sector providers to co-locate with public sector providers.

Increase the capacity of co-located public-private sector initiatives to account for outcomes.

Encourage local programs to expand opportunities for individual tutorials to children.

Stimulate exchange of successful learning strategies between learning systems for adults and children.

[When giving grants to increase literacy skills,] give applicants as much latitude as possible in defining their proposal and funding needs, subject the proposal to a cost-benefit analysis, and negotiate the funding amount as needed.

Require each proposal to include volunteers as one component of the initiative.

#### **Kansas**

The literacy field must become more professional, accountable, and politically aware.

Literacy is only one aspect of adult education and, as with all education programs, should be led by professional educators.

#### **Kentucky**

Ensuring that adequate resources are available will continue to be an issue. With block grants and performance standards, the least educated, most in need may not be the priority target population for the limited resources. This will widen the gap between the “haves” and “have nots” in Kentucky. Economic development and workforce development must develop hand in hand for success of both initiatives. This problem needs attention at both the state and national levels. Typically each has struck out alone.

#### **Louisiana**

The priorities of the national leaders (Executive *and* Legislative Branches) drive the state leadership because of funds. The priorities of the next administration (within the state) will heavily impact the distribution of all block grant funds.

#### **Michigan**

Not sure.

#### **Minnesota**

They will need to show how they are utilizing existing resources and how they fit into the bigger picture (job training, welfare-to-work, family skills).

#### **Missouri**

Libraries are not major providers in our state. I think it will be easy to decrease funding to them. They have not reached out to local programs for the most part.

#### **Mississippi**

#1 problem will be access.

#2 problem will be communicating to both the Governor's office and the State Workforce Commission the significant role libraries play in our state.

#### **Montana**

Going up against a much better organized education establishment.

#### **North Carolina**

Don't know.

#### **North Dakota**

It's difficult to speculate at this time.

#### **Nebraska NE**

This sense of “competition” is indeed a major concern. However, what I would most like to see are programs—including library literacy—joining forces, pooling resources (including \$), and ceasing the fight for dollars. If we continue, though, to think only in terms of “my”

problem or goal. With the scope of the problem, as cited in the National Adult Literacy Survey...this nation needs to commit to long-term solutions.

With [Mrs. Bush and...state-level first ladies] taking on the issue as part of their husbands' terms... the public may have thought the problem would disappear in [a few] years ...[but] literacy will not be resolved as part of a campaign platform or a one-year community project.

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**WE NEED NATIONAL LEADERSHIP —AND FUNDING FOR IT**

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It is also worth observing that even though economic and political pressures will force state and local groups of all kinds to fend for themselves more in the future, there is no substitute for strong national leadership.

Without it, it would be impossible to truly avoid duplication of services...or synthesize and apply what is known from national and world experience about good practice...or create good state and national policy...or advance citizenship and learning with reference to

<b>Table G2, cont'd</b>			
			program , or “our” program, this kind of competition will continue. Libraries do need to be a part of any workforce development boards or planning for statewide initiatives. So do the SLRCs!
	<b>New Hampshire</b>		Competition for funds will be intense.
	<b>New Mexico</b>		In NM these projects are able to compete well with other local literacy projects.
	<b>Oklahoma</b>		Probably increased administrative and managerial demands on reduced staff.
	<b>Pennsylvania</b>		Ensure that literacy resources are made available to service providers and adult students. (State Education Department) As “block grant” funds are identified for adult education, line item(s) for library resources should be included.
	<b>South Carolina</b>		They will get the “short end of the stick.” Their lobbying group is not as strong in SC as the adult education group.
	<b>South Dakota</b>		Will depend on plan that would be provided by Governor’s office.
	<b>Utah</b>		Reality: 6 wolves in a pen and only food for 3.
	<b>Vermont</b>		n/a.
	<b>Virginia</b>		Library personnel have to be proactive, have initiative in building bridges. This is a situation people in AE and literacy also face; it is important to see themselves as a working part and essential component to a whole, to put aside turf battles and insularity because only by seeing they need each other can they hope to survive.
	<b>Washington</b>		Library literacy undoubtedly will not be funded out of the Workforce Development Act block grant. However, libraries in Washington currently receive little or no literacy funding beyond LSCA.
	<b>Wisconsin</b>		State education agencies are not necessarily the ones which will be in control. Library personnel are not alone in their concerns.
	<b>West Virginia</b>		We are all worried about drastic cuts in funding, especially in trying to document “human relations” gains such as improvements in self-esteem, etc.

the common goals that hold a nation together.

To put it in more practical terms, it isn’t hard to see that the many

planning and technical assistance services that national organizations provide to their members —the relationship of the national voluntary organi-

zations to their affiliate programs is a perfect example—are an essential lifeline to the local groups, even to groups in the most isolated locations.

Yet national groups have always had great difficulty getting the funding they need for core services because funders see “technical assistance” as dull and vague and less immediately rewarding than direct instruction. But for local groups to be effective (and often state groups for that matter), they need the nurturing and information services of comprehensive one-stop national entities.

As national organizations themselves struggle against great financial odds, they should be heartened that most of the individuals surveyed in this study clearly recognize, value, and need them.

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### **MORE IDEAS FOR THE HOPPER**

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In G 3, state library literacy contacts and SLRC heads were asked to speculate on the type of state-level or national help *local library literacy programs themselves* could most benefit from.

About a third of the study participants did not respond to the question at all, suggesting considerable uncertainty about local needs. But from

**G3. What state-level or national assistance not now provided to local library literacy programs in your state do you think the programs would most benefit from? What strategies/projects can you suggest for developing the assistance they need?** [Q2, Q3]

Q2 State Library Literacy Contacts (25 of 44, 57%)  
 Q3 SLRCs (27 of 40, 68%)

**Alaska**

Q2 Libraries in Alaska, as elsewhere, have had to cut back in many areas after the “boom years” when funding was strong. Good intentions for literacy programming have succumbed to trying to maintain some level of basic services. Unless a new, stable source of revenue is found, libraries are unlikely to take on new programs. Space is also a problem: many libraries in Alaska were built with oil money and are now crowded and in need of repair, with no relief in sight.

Q3 Channel funds through existing literacy network of 20 regional providers.

**Alabama**

Q3 At the national level you need to be a stronger advocate for networking. Stop funding so many entities. You are creating and currently advocating duplication of services.

**Arkansas**

Q2 Increased cooperation with activities between other adult education providers and local public libraries. Provision of more cooperative funding opportunities on federal level for public libraries and other literacy agencies.

**California**

Q2 Funding for library literacy services (increased).

Q3 Statewide library literacy newsletter (quarterly). Publication (regular) of abstracts of successful library literacy programs.

**Colorado**

Q2 No opinion.

Q3 They currently receive technical assistance from our office of adult education. If federal funds are lost, they will need state/local support.

**Connecticut**

Q3 Funding directly to programs or for the establishment of new programs based on existing successful models.

**Delaware**

Q2 Our libraries rank low nationally and we are striving to develop basic services. Hopefully, literacy will receive more attention once our libraries receive more support.

**Florida**

Q2 A mechanism is needed to determine the long-term impact tutoring/program support provided by libraries make in the lives of those served/tutored once they leave the program (e.g. percent that go on to pass GED, get a trade or continue in college, get a degree, become employable). Also needed is a national tracking system that provides feedback.

**Hawaii**

Q3 Family literacy. Training and technology.



**Table G3, cont'd**

**Illinois**

Q2 In light of the coming changes which block granting might bring, I suggest they will need assistance with resource development either through coordination with other agencies or through other sources such as foundations, Friends of the Library groups, civic organizations, etc.

Q3 I would like to see ILA and ALA more active in promoting and sponsoring training for librarians in effective literacy efforts and partnerships. I realize that there have been some attempts such as the ILA and Head Start video, but there's much more that could be done. We also need to promote literacy in libraries through the local communities which support public libraries. School libraries could also play a significant role in literacy. Our experience indicates that libraries sometimes don't have a clear understanding of what they can do in literacy.

**Indiana**

Q2 Help to determine what works, successful practices, model coalition, technology. Public education and public relations. More literacy student involvement in planning. Continued cooperation between organizations at the national and state level.

Q3 Need stable revenue stream. Become more entrepreneurial and approach business committee about what it needs (Kevin Kostner's Friends of Dreams approach doesn't work well).

**Iowa**

Q3 Electronic hook-up.

**Kentucky**

Q2 Data collection. Distribution of information.

Q3 Funds and curriculum for technology and technology training. Continue Title VI funding. More policy and supervisory support for library literacy personnel. Consolidate literacy funding from all sources to single source.

**Louisiana**

Q3 Federal - Title IV. LEH funds depend upon NEH funds. Given the current climate, I do not know what strategies might be effective.

**Massachusetts**

Q2 We really hear little directly from the ALA or from COSLA. A lot of the literacy activities are promoted from this agency outward to the public libraries and at an interagency level. We need to teach state agencies to do both horizontal and vertical collaboration (see Nickse-Quezada *Community Collaborations for Family Literacy Handbook*).

**Maine**

Q2 More funding to assist program development. Targeting special interest volunteers (Friends etc.) to assist in setting up programs, services, places to tutor, and materials in libraries. Strategic planning sessions on a local level. This needs to be a grassroots project but the state library can provide facilitators.

**Michigan**

Q3 Marketing to maintain literacy as a national focus. Individual entities do not have resources or expertise to keep issue alive over time.

the two-thirds that did respond, there is an interesting mix of ideas to consider, though many are next-step ideas for the field generally rather than suggestions to directly help local programs:

◆ Space is a problem. Many libraries in Alaska were built with oil money and are in need of repair, with no relief in sight. (Q2, AK)

◆ A statewide library literacy newsletter...and regularly published abstracts of successful library literacy programs [would be helpful]. (Q3, CA)

◆ A mechanism is needed to determine the long-term impact that library literacy programs make in the lives of those served after they leave the program. What is needed is the development of a national tracking system that provides regular feedback. (Q2, FL)

◆ The ILA and ALA should become more active in promoting and sponsoring training for librarians in how to work effectively in literacy. There have been some attempts but...much more could be done. Our experience indicates that

libraries sometimes don't have a clear understanding of what they can do in literacy. (Q3, IL)

◆ We hear little directly from the ALA or COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies)... [but their help is needed] in activities to teach state agencies to do both horizontal and vertical collaboration. (Q2, MA)

◆ Strategic planning sessions on a local level are needed. This needs to be a grassroots project but the state library can provide facilitators. (Q2, ME)

◆ Wage-based programs are needed because the present reliance on volunteers is excessive and unsustainable. (Q2-NE, Q2-TX)

◆ More detailed information about library literacy programs around the country would be helpful. E-mail addresses of online library literacy programs would also help. (Q2, NH)

◆ Develop library literacy leaders through a national training institute similar to the ALA Intellectual Freedom Leadership

**Table G3, cont'd**

**Minnesota**

Q3 Funding assistance and better ways for linking with existing programs. Chances are that somebody, somewhere has done what you want to do. Facilitating some collaboration or just resource sharing is critical. More funding for the SLRCs would help. That (is) was part of the SLRC mission as set out in the National Literacy Act—to facilitate collaboration and resource sharing. In our case, our SLRC never got a chance to get going.

**Missouri**

Q2 Targeted library literacy resources including speakers, resource materials, and lobbying information.

Q3 The libraries need to become part of local programs, but ABE programs do not include them in their partnerships. Our SLRC is trying to develop closer links with libraries. Family literacy programs have formed better relationships with libraries.

**Mississippi**

Q2 The development of family literacy programs. Raising community awareness of the value in providing family literacy programs. Family literacy needs are being addressed in two ways in the state: (a) Some libraries in the state participated in the Viburnum/ALA Rural Family Literacy Workshop and are seeking funds through the project to conduct family literacy projects in their communities. (b) The Mississippi Library Commission has committed approximately \$75,000 to assist public libraries in enhancing and developing library programs directed toward young children at risk.

Q3 Develop models that will strongly link the programs to both the State Workforce Council and schools.

**Montana**

Q3 Stronger connection among the programs—meetings, electronic, etc.

**Nebraska**

Q2 A wage-based program (presently volunteer-based). Continuance of the University Clearinghouse.

Q3 State: Assistance in terms of establishing cooperative relationships, enhancing awareness of other programs and opportunities within each community for learners. Because of their position within most states, the SLRCs are well-positioned to provide this function; however, it also demands a commitment from the state in terms of carrying this out.  
National: There is much that could be done within this same area in terms of providing the library commission and local libraries with specific information on how to cultivate such cooperative relationships.

**New Hampshire**

Q2 More detailed information about library literacy programs around the country, for networking and sharing. E-mail addresses of other online library literacy programs. Student and tutor “chats” or “pen-pals” online. Perhaps a voluntary questionnaire about programming to other library literacy programs.

Q3 Continued funding would add to the stability and long-term planning for these programs.

**New Jersey,**

Q3 Generating awareness of library staff to benefit involvement in literacy movement.

**New York**

Q2 Statewide conferencing. Technical assistance. Data collection and analysis.

*Table G3, cont'd*

**North Dakota**

Q2 Training students/trainers in use of technology to develop literacy skills.

Q3 Training for state library personnel in understanding their role in the literacy movement.

**Ohio**

Q2 We are working with other agencies that provide literacy support. I have been assigned to “literacy” within the last year and am still making contacts. I will continue to work with them to support cooperative projects.

**Oklahoma**

Q2 Better networking between each other, other states, and national resources. Computer access and training may encourage better communication. Stable funding for library-based literacy programs. It is hard to operate any program, much less volunteer programs, with such uncertain funding. National awareness and promotion of library literacy programs would be very beneficial.

**Oregon**

Q2 Develop library literacy leaders through a national training institute similar to the ALA Intellectual Freedom Leadership Institute. A train-the-trainers approach could help spread the message back in the states. The passion for literacy services must be extended.

**Pennsylvania**

Q2 Assistance is provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.

**South Carolina**

Q2 A clearer focus on what library literacy programs are in relation to formal educational efforts. Public libraries often do not receive credit for their efforts.

Q3 The continued funding for SLRCs to assure the continued access to the latest materials for the new reader and the literacy tutor.

**Texas**

Q2 Clearinghouse and/or assistance programs that bring together literacy providers to share materials, evaluation, and knowledge. Funding for materials, equipment, and staff. Cannot depend on volunteers much longer. Long-term financial support.

**Utah**

Q3 Consult librarians. Discussion.

**Vermont**

Q2 Funds to develop collections and purchase technology for self-instruction as well as funds to coordinate community collaboration.

Q3 New reader awareness—break stereotypes. Need information on materials and promotion of materials for new readers.

**Virginia**

Q3 Leadership that is visible, action-oriented, and able to initiate working partnerships with adult education and literacy programs (public and private). Give library personnel “release time” to attend adult education and literacy workshops that will facilitate developing skills and knowledge in helping adult learners.

I was pleased to see that there was a general perception that the national role for advocacy and information dissemination was felt as important. This area has had little study and is important for national organizations because we often receive little feedback and it is difficult to fund this aspect of our work. The general appreciation and support for national literacy efforts was surprising as well as reassuring. (Peter Waite, Laubach Literacy Action)

Institute. A train-the-trainers approach could help spread the message back to the states. (Q2, OR)

◆ Give library personnel “release time” to attend adult education and literacy workshops. (Q3, VA)

## BEYOND THE SURVEY: LOCAL PROGRAMS GET THE LAST WORD

The very last survey question invited local library literacy programs to indicate any issues or concerns of special importance to them that were not addressed in the study. Some 25% of the programs took advantage of the opportunity.

Although the resulting table (G 4), which is very short, ought to be read in its entirety, this section of the report will conclude by spotlighting, with only minor editing, a few of the responses. They are heartfelt, honest, and filled with understanding and commitment. They “say it like it is” and are a challenge to us all:

◆ As funds have been allocated for adult training, libraries are usually not considered or even thought of as a source. When job skills were mandated for food stamp recipients, the college’s ABE program was given the contract. Our program could and would serve these clients, but the library was not contacted. (Mesa County Public Library, CO)

◆ Because adults

*Table G3, cont’d*

What is obvious of course is: more funds to support their literacy work!!!

### West Virginia

Q2 Training. Awareness campaign. Funding!!!

Q3 The LSCA Title VI grant is now gone. It was extremely helpful before in providing materials and software.

### Wisconsin

Q3 State and national funding should find ways to allow and facilitate collaborative planning and delivery of services.

### Wyoming

Q2 LSCA Title VI helped several library literacy programs in the past.

### G4. If an issue or concern of special importance to you has been overlooked in this questionnaire, please feel free to discuss it here. [Q4 only]

Q4 Local Programs (16 of 63, 25%)

AR Adequate training to work with minorities.  
(AR River Valley Libraries for Literacy - Reading Together, AR River Valley Regional Library)

CA Need to raise awareness of connection between learning disabilities and low literacy skills. Literacy providers/organizations tend to favor whole language approach, which is not effective with many dyslexic adults. We are training our tutors to work with dyslexic individuals. However, this has required specialized training for our staff and intensive monitoring of tutors. Making this commitment means we can serve fewer individuals at one time. However, we feel that we are providing better service, and we can demonstrate greater accountability. National ALLD Center is doing a great job disseminating information, but there needs to be more advocacy for learners with LDs.  
(Partners in Reading, San Jose Public Library)

CO As funds have been allocated for adult training, libraries are usually not considered or even thought of as a source. When job skills were mandated for food stamp recipients, the college’s ABE program was given the contract. Our program could and would serve these clients, but the library was not contacted. However, I must add that most libraries don’t see literacy service as a primary part of their mission, thus taking themselves out of the circle. (Literacy Program, Mesa County Public Library District)

FL If libraries take a position of decreased support of literacy programs, it is sending a message that they will implicitly not provide access to at least 20% of the population (see National Literacy Survey). This is inconsistent with other outreach efforts to special groups (seniors, youth, minorities, et al). (Hillsborough Literacy Council, Tampa-Hillsborough County Library System)

IL Literacy providers need to be more proactive. Just because we use volunteers [doesn’t mean we’re not] a very professional agency. Some libraries (not ours) view literacy as a bother. (Libraries for Literacy in Lake County, Waukegan Public Library)

MA Because adults seeking literacy instruction keep a very low profile, they are not visible or vocal. This is a population without a voice. With the rise in technology

**Table G4, cont'd**

and its pervasiveness in the workforce, they have to contend with a tremendous barrier to accessing information. With low job opportunity, low literacy skills, inability to access information through print or computer technology, will anything ever change for them quickly enough to effect a difference for themselves and their families? (*Literacy Program, Thomas Crane Public Library*)

MI Share your analysis of these surveys with all state literacy agencies and state departments of education, [and] with education committees in the federal legislative arena, the President, and Congress. (*MARC Literacy Program, Greenville Public Library*)

MN Libraries are more than stored memories! They are increasingly becoming community centers and this should be supported/celebrated. Libraries have been heralds to immigrants/new readers. They still can be, but some seem prone to confusion about their roles. (*Franklin Learning Center, Franklin Community Library, Minneapolis Public Library*)

MN Because Minnesota has a strong collaborative of literacy services and support groups our perspective can be very different from a state that does not have this structure and the local library is the literacy service provider. (*Linking Libraries & Literacy for Lifelong Learning, Lexington Branch Library, St. Paul*)

NE Availability of stable funding has always been a concern of nonprofit organizations. Most private foundations do not want to fund ongoing programs or salaries for staff. At the current time, 50% of our funding is through the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA VI). We feel we have a vital, well-organized adult education and tutoring program; yet, from year to year, it is difficult to find funding. The LSCA grant has traditionally covered salaries and materials. There must be recognition at the state or local level that adult literacy programs must be given at least partial stable funding, so we can continue providing adults and their children literacy skills. (*Platte Valley Literacy Association, Columbus Public Library*)

NJ Assessment programs for basic math and tutor training videos and materials for math tutors would be helpful. (*Basic Skills for Reading & ESL, Elizabeth Public Library*)

NY There is evidence that the functional illiteracy of many American adults may have a severe effect on our economic health. Yet, even if jobs were available, if they can't read well enough they can't work those jobs. Adult education, which is not a part of public education anymore, seems to have become a stepchild of library services which for the most part are underfunded in New York State. The public schools used to conduct adult basic education, ESL, etc. Now it seems to be up to agencies such as PIC, literacy groups such as LLA and LVA. I am hoping that block grants to the state will make public education more accountable and that out of monies designated for public education there will be a set amount for libraries that libraries can count on especially if they are to take over the role of adult education. (*Library Literacy Center of Prendergast Library, Jamestown*)

OR The importance of basic language and math skills to our economy is about to be diminished in the frantic quest for a quick fix in work-related skills programs. If we don't help those with minimum skills get to the level where they can enter job training, society will have to support them in one way or another. (*LEARN Project, Eugene Public Library*)

PA The National Adult Literacy Survey of 1993 received only a split second of media attention, but it was the most far-reaching survey of adult literacy in the U.S. This survey seems to have been forgotten, but it found that 90 million adults lack the literacy skills necessary to function in today's world. This survey points to a national crisis which seems to have been overlooked and forgotten by many. (*Bradford-Wyoming County Literacy Program, Bradford County Library*)

seeking literacy instruction keep a low profile, they are not visible or vocal. This is a population without a voice. With the rise in technology and its pervasiveness in the workforce, they have to contend with a tremendous barrier to accessing information. With low job opportunity, low literacy skills, inability to access information through print or computer technology, will things change for them quickly enough to make a difference for themselves and their families? (Thomas Crane Public Library, MA)

◆ Libraries are more than stored memories! They are increasingly becoming community centers and this should be supported and celebrated. Libraries have been heralds to immigrants and new readers. They still can be, but some seem prone to confusion about their roles. (Minneapolis Public Library, MN)

◆ The National Adult Literacy Survey of 1993 received only a split second of media attention, but it was the most far-reaching survey of adult literacy in the U.S. This survey seems to have been

**Table G4, cont'd**

TX

My concern is meeting the needs of a primarily Hispanic population, many of the students served are illiterate in their native language and it is difficult to find appropriate materials for native language literacy instruction. (*Literacy Center, El Paso Public Library*)

UT

Libraries should be in the business of providing services to all of their patrons, not just the literate population. As our society becomes more diverse and access to information becomes more critical, libraries have a responsibility to enhance or sponsor literacy efforts. [Also], focus groups have revealed that our students value computer instruction alongside their literacy instruction. Childcare and work schedules often interfere with participation. We need to respond better to childcare and transportation needs. (*Bridgerland Literacy, Logan Library*)

forgotten, but it points to a national crisis. (Bradford County Library, PA)

◆ The importance of basic language and math skills to our economy is about to be diminished in the frantic quest for a quick fix in work-related skills programs. If we

don't help those with minimum skills get to the level where they can enter job training, society will have to support them in one way or another. (Eugene Public Library, OR)

◆ Libraries should be in the business of

providing services to all of their patrons, not just the literate population. As our society becomes more diverse and access to information becomes more critical, libraries have a responsibility to enhance or sponsor literacy efforts. (Logan Library, UT)

## 8. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Public libraries are an important mainstay of American life, with some 15,000 central and branch facilities spread across this nation. They have a long, proud tradition of community and educational service.

Judging by what the participants of this survey say, and by the large number of public libraries now involved in the provision of adult literacy service (some 7,000 not counting branches), public libraries also embrace adult literacy service as a central part of their ongoing mission, although with occasional ambivalence. They are a community anchor for literacy—or as one project advisor put it, they could well be seen as “the irreducible backbone of the literacy movement.”

Throughout the country—in state library agencies, state literacy resource centers, local library literacy programs, and among state librarians themselves—examples of committed and inspired leadership abound. These bright lights are well worth cele-

brating in their own right and should never be lost sight of in the national averaging and analyses that make up most of this report.

However, the study is about problems and possibilities, and, as it turns out, about the fraying lifeline that presently links public libraries to adult literacy. As the title of this report proclaims, this lifeline needs to be reinforced as a matter of grave urgency.

Otherwise, hundreds of thousands of poorly skilled adult Americans being helped to improve those skills every year by public libraries—and by public libraries *alone*—could lose their best hope for achieving their full potential as workers, parents, and citizens. And vast numbers of public library adult literacy programs—including affiliates of Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach Literacy Action that are housed in public libraries—will be forced to severely curtail their operations or close down altogether.

Ironically, just as public library literacy programs have become an established part of the adult literacy system, they find themselves in terrible jeopardy. They are being squeezed by diminished funding for adult literacy generally, threats that federal library literacy funding will not be available in any form in the near future, and reduced state library budgets.

It is hoped that those now in positions of leadership—and those who *could* be—will read the findings and recommendations presented below with an eye toward what new roles they can assume.

Among those in the best position to accept the challenge are the American Library Association, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, state libraries and library associations, federal and state departments of education, the National Institute for Literacy, the National Coalition for Literacy, Literacy Volunteers of America, Laubach

Literacy, governors, state literacy resource centers (SLRCs), university-based literacy institutes, the Center for the Book, the philanthropic community—and there are many others, including the President and members of Congress.

*Even Anchors Need Lifelines* is full of more ideas, findings, and suggested remedies than can possibly be explored fully in one short document. But this report has been designed as a resource that can have a life well into the future—in the coming discussions, meetings, and studies of all who care about adult literacy and the role of public libraries.

In the meantime, the report’s main findings are given below, followed by 19 recommendations (on pp. 121-125) for preserving and developing the public library role.

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### ~ ROLE ~

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✓ **1** When it comes to providing adult literacy services, public libraries

play a unique, substantial, and cost-effective role that is vastly beneficial to all parties involved. But their role has not yet been clearly enough defined, which handicaps advocacy, funding, and policy development.

✓ **2.** Some 70% of state library personnel surveyed believe that adult literacy services should be a *major* public library mission. (Many of the others are either unsure or think the role should be less than major.) Moreover, the vast majority of *all* respondents think adult literacy should be even more important to public libraries in the future.

✓ **3.** Despite their strong, even passionate, belief in adult literacy, only 50% of state libraries currently have a major adult literacy involvement. Lack of funding at the state and federal levels is the basic reason for the discrepancy between what state libraries *say* about the importance of their adult literacy role and what they *do*. Without external funding help, the situation is certain to worsen, especially as the state

agencies struggle to preserve their core operating budgets.

✓ **4.** Communication is poor among state library personnel, the SLRCs, and local library literacy programs.

✓ **5.** State librarians, and librarians generally, are too little involved in state and national literacy planning.

✓ **6.** Librarians, traditional adult educators, state and national legislative entities, and funders have a limited understanding of the important public library role in providing adult literacy services. Yet the policy and funding actions of these very groups most affect libraries *and* literacy.

✓ **7.** Tension, mistrust, and occasional hostility between education and library agencies makes cooperative planning difficult. Traditional educators often do not recognize or accept the educational role of public libraries. Tendencies to protect turf need to give way to cooperation and mutual respect.

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~ **TECHNOLOGY** ~

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✓ **1.** In general, public library literacy personnel strongly favor the increased use of computers in their institutions and programs.

✓ **2.** Local library literacy programs make heavy use of computer technology now, but they are hesitant to increase that use while struggling to keep their very programs alive.

✓ **3.** Interest is high in using distance learning technology for library literacy purposes—understood by most respondents to be computer, Internet, and World Wide Web information technology. There appears to be only moderate understanding of the potential of the instructional broadcast media as traditionally defined, despite the tremendous potential of this vast undertapped resource.

✓ **4.** Even if local programs had the funds to invest in more technology, the information they need about good models in use

There is no shared agreement about the role of library literacy service from any umbrella organization. Professional organizations such as the IRA...have taken leadership in setting standards for English and language arts throughout the country. Perhaps the ALA could take the lead for literacy. (Diane Rosenthal, NY)

This report shows a tremendous need to debate, and to [better document] the benefits...of libraries as education/literacy service providers. (Barbara Humes, OERI)

by their peers is in very short supply.

✓ **5.** If they must choose one or the other, state library agencies are more interested in technology for the purpose of expanding their general



public information services than for its use as an adult literacy tool. In many cases, technology would have to be in place for general purposes before it could be put into adult literacy service.

✓ **6.** The greatest obstacle to wider technology use among all groups surveyed is a critical lack of funding to purchase hardware and software, and to develop trained staff to support them.

✓ **7.** Technology can help improve instruction and information management, but it can also destroy important human values and sap the core services of underfunded local library literacy programs.

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~ **PLANNING** ~

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✓ **1.** Most states have a statewide literacy planning body of some kind. Most state library agencies are involved in that planning, although, with a few exceptions, they do not have a strong voice.

✓ **2.** SLRCs are presently the main source of planning and resource development

help to libraries and other literacy stakeholders at the state level.

✓ **3.** With some remarkable exceptions, SLRCs have been badly implemented and financially starved. Many have been forced to close or severely cut back their services because federal funding for them ceased in FY95. Without a restoration of funding, many others will not long survive or remain effective. Their death or crippling would deprive state libraries and other groups of a vital source of information and technical assistance—at a time when it is most needed.

✓ **4.** SLRCs (and the state departments of education in which many are lodged) have weak working relations with the American Library Association and other state and national library professional groups that are interested or engaged in adult literacy.

✓ **5.** Similarly, state libraries have generally weak working relations with key national organizations that shape overall adult literacy policy and funding.

In Tennessee we have worked very well with state level staff, but still find it a bit difficult to “convince” local providers, both library and adult education, of the advisability of being very collaborative with each other.  
(Nancy Weatherman, TN)

Cooperation, collaboration, and partnerships between the local literacy program and other literacy and education programs is the key—not competition and duplication of effort.. Collaboration between the local library literacy programs and the rest of the library is also essential.  
(Judy Stark, OERI)

✓ **6.** Public libraries need the help of national organizations to develop informational materials...carry out awareness and planning activities...and devise strategies for program coordination and collaboration.

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~ **FINANCES-FUNDING** ~

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✓ **1.** More than 50% of state libraries provided some local library literacy funding in FY95, including many who do not consider adult literacy services a major part of their mission. But, in most cases the funding was minimal, ranging from \$4,000 to \$70,000. Only

seven state libraries provided a six-figure amount (between \$100,000-\$385,000). California and Illinois, in a class by themselves, provided \$3,466,000 and \$6,000,000 respectively. Furthermore, federal LSCA funds, rather than allocations from the core library budget, accounted for much of the state library funding.

✓ **2.** Permanent loss of federal funds for library literacy or a shift to block grants without earmarks specifically for library literacy would force most

programs to cut deeply into the muscle of their services. Even worse, many would be unable to survive. Few respondents believe replacement funding could be found.

✓ **3.** Public libraries need the help of national literacy and library organizations to restore lost funding and develop additional funding and more funding stability.

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~ **STATE-LEVEL PROGRAM DATA** ~

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✓ **1.** With a few exceptions, state libraries do not regularly collect data on local public library literacy activities, and neither do any other groups. This void undercuts the efforts of state libraries and others working to advance library literacy.

✓ **2.** There is a crying need for consistent and comparable data collection at the state and national levels. Data kept according to the population service area categories in use by the National Center for Educational Statistics would be especially useful. Fortunately, there are a few truly extraordinary models of effective leadership on this front—the state libraries in Illinois, Massachusetts, Florida, and California, for example—from which others could learn.

✓ **3.** Although their role is not fully recognized, public libraries are a vital component of the country's adult literacy delivery system. Without counting individual branch operations, an estimated 2,000+ local public libraries nationwide have a major involvement in providing

adult literacy services today. An additional 5,700 are involved to some degree.

✓ **4.** State library funding for literacy is heavily dependent on federal LSCA grants. Much of it will evaporate if federal funding is not restored or if block grants are not earmarked for state libraries and library literacy.

✓ **5.** Although state libraries give little direct funding to local library literacy programs, they give many other important services—at a substantial cost.

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~ **LOCAL PROGRAMS** ~

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✓ **1. Who and What They Are:** Local library literacy programs are a mix of LVA, Laubach, and eclectic programs. Some are outside entities housed in public libraries, others are directly operated by the library. They rely heavily on volunteers, focus on one-to-one and small group instruction, tend to be based on whole language principles, and follow flexible teaching methods geared to the life

needs of their adult learners. Their fundamental purpose is to provide help to the most poorly skilled adults (who are not served by traditional school or ABE programs), enabling them to acquire the basic reading, writing, math, and ESL proficiency needed to advance to higher-level educational programs and achieve their personally-determined functional goals.

✓ **2. Their Students:** In FY95, of the 53,000 students served by the sampling of programs in this study, 32% were Hispanic, 23% were Black. Some 36% were unemployed, and 50% were in the workforce either part- or full-time. 93% were between the ages of 17 and 59. The gender balance was 45% male and 55% female. A disproportionately high percentage were on public assistance and were high school noncompleters.

✓ **3. Their Reliance on Federal Funding.** 75% of the programs (chosen for this study because of their longevity and solid track records) have been in operation 10 years or less,

The most alarming part of the survey findings is the minimal level of state funding for literacy programs throughout the country. (Dan Boyd, SD)

One thing that surprised me (although I knew it intellectually) was just how different the situations are in individual states. It seems like block grants will create very uneven services from state to state. The data from these surveys really emphasized that for me. Overall this is a bad thing. It will make programs very political and could increase program favoritism (a comment made often by the respondents). (Virginia Heinrich, MN)

state funding only 10%.) The permanent withdrawal of federal funds or unearmarked state block grant funding would be disastrous for the local programs.

✓ **4. Their Low Cost.**

Library literacy programs operate with very small staffs and limited budgets. They are truly one of the country's great educational bargains. In FY95 all programs in this study averaged 1 full-time staff member for every 390 students, 1 paid staff member for every 172 students, 1 volunteer tutor for every 8 students, and a per-student cost of \$107.

✓ **5. Their Service To Working Adults.**

Some 25% of the programs surveyed regularly serve part- and full-time workers. Crippling the library-based delivery system would thus have an adverse impact on workforce and workplace literacy.

✓ **6.** State library agencies are not the dominant source of technical and planning help to local programs but they are a highly important source. If the SLRC role keeps

There have to be some leadership activities. The Center for the Book would provide ideal auspices for some, but there are others. To get started, the activities required need not cost very much.

Being willing to put up funding for leadership is a test of whether anybody really cares about the programs. (Forrest Chisman, SIPA)

shrinking, state libraries may need to pick up the slack.

✓ **7.** Adult literacy programs experience three main problems because they operate in a library culture: trouble competing for local education funds... widespread salary inequities... and low status in the eyes of other library personnel.

✓ **8.** The library culture is beneficial to adult literacy programs in many ways. For example, an immense variety of free resources... an inviting, stigma-free setting...great flexibility because the programs are not arbitrarily held to

inappropriate regulations designed for traditional education...a natural path to volunteers in the community...and a highly supportive natural environment for families.

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~ **LIFEBLOOD ISSUES & LEADERSHIP** ~

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✓ **1.** For adult literacy services in public libraries to survive and thrive, bold state and national leadership is essential. Funding for that leadership is also essential.

✓ **2.** The field is still handicapped by a "quick fix" mentality. Upgrading adult basic skills takes time. ■

corresponding to the 10-year period in which LSCA Title VI grants were made. Only 21% pre-date 1983 and the launching of the adult literacy movement as a whole. In the fall of 1995, 65% of all the programs had some federal funding, with federal LSCA grants accounting for 40% of their total funding (and

Throw down the gauntlet and challenge The Center for the Book/Library of Congress, the American Library Association, and others (e.g. foundations like Lilly and MacArthur) to help. (Shelley Quezada, MA)

The Center for the Book, LVA, Laubach, and the National Institute for Literacy could come together as a dynamic advocate for community-based library literacy programs by communicating to our legislators that literacy is accomplished one by one and that learning takes time.

We shouldn't abandon the programs now that the infrastructure is established in many parts of the country. (Virginia Schantz, MI)

## ~ RECOMMENDATIONS ~

The single most urgent issue identified in this report is the dire need for funds and funding stability. In fact, funding may well be the defining issue for the future of public libraries in adult literacy. Recommendations #1 and #2 are addressed to this life-and-death matter.

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### **RECOMMENDATION #1:**

**Earmarked funding in a significant dollar amount needs to be restored for library literacy programming—at the federal level, in state block grants, or both.**

This should be done to prevent a major implosion of the field. It can be achieved most quickly through federal and state legislation. The extreme urgency of this matter needs to be conveyed immediately to Congress and to state legislators and governors. It is vital to keep in mind that voluntary organizations, community-based organizations, and adults across the country have as much at stake as public libraries have.

Individually and in joint actions, the following groups need to speak out: national

adult literacy leaders from across the spectrum of private and public interests...committed state librarians and commissioners...the American Library Association...the National Institute for Literacy...the Office of Educational Research and Improvement...the Office of Vocational and Adult Education...the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies...Literacy Volunteers of America... Laubach Literacy Action...the Association for Community Based Education...the National Coalition for Literacy... and any other group whose voice could make a

difference and who will be affected by the outcome.

Local library literacy personnel need to speak out as well.

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### **RECOMMENDATION #2:**

**The philanthropic community should offer immediate help. It would make a profound difference.**

The new three-year grant initiative of the Lila Wallace-Readers' Digest Fund is a very bright light on a dark horizon. But, in the present situation, respon-

siveness is needed from other foundations as well.

Foundations can often move more quickly than government bureaucracies, and it would be in their best tradition if several responded to this call to action. The Kellogg and MacArthur Foundations, and the Ford, Lilly, and Mott Foundations, are all examples.

Funds placed in the hands of the ALA and/or state library agencies themselves might be used in the first instance to help local library literacy programs keep their balance while time is taken to develop thoughtful long-range plans.

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**RECOMMENDATION #3:**

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**Assuming that federal and/or state library literacy funding will be forthcoming, consideration should be given to officially designating state library agencies the lead state agencies for planning and developing local public library adult literacy programming.**

Even though state library involvement in adult literacy varies from

state to state now, there is substantial experience and a very strong state library interest on which to build.

As part of this official leadership role, the agencies should be given fiscal and administrative responsibility. To be effective they would need to consult regularly with other state agencies, especially education and literacy groups. They would also need to consult with each other, through COSLA and other ongoing forums.

Guidelines would probably need to be written into federal and/or state law to assure an equitable redistribution of the funds to local libraries for their literacy programs.

This recommendation may need considerable refinement given the politics involved and structural differences in the organization of education and library services from state to state. But without funding and real opportunity to “buy-in,” it is hard to see how even the most willing state libraries can take a wider leadership role than they now have.

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**RECOMMENDATION #4:**

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**Form a national planning alliance.**

Membership should include state libraries, local library literacy programs, state and local leaders from the adult education and literacy field, SLRCs, students, national analysts and researchers, representatives of federal and state government, and concerned business representatives.

The alliance would be an excellent forum in which to develop policy and resources and promote the sharing of resources. It might have a small publications component. Its lifespan could be determined by the membership.

The Center for the Book or the ALA might provide a home for the new initiative, with funding to be sought from multiple outside sources.

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**RECOMMENDATION #5:**

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**State librarians should form an action group, perhaps within COSLA, to plan for their wider**

**and more effective involvement in supporting and developing adult literacy services in their local public libraries.**

A major goal should be to become more active participants in all state and national planning forums where policy and funding issues for literacy are the focus, and where they and public library literacy programs have a stake.

Librarians must insist on having a full and equal partnership role, but adult literacy and education professionals must also become more aware of the education and literacy role of public libraries and take steps to include them.

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**RECOMMENDATION #6:**

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**In parallel to the COSLA action group suggested in #5, state librarians should develop regular two-way channels of communication with local libraries offering adult literacy services.**

The communications link would improve the understanding each has of what the other is doing, build an atmosphere of mutual support and trust, and provide a

stronger framework within which to work together.

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**RECOMMENDATION #7:**

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**Create a national library literacy data collection system.**

At the national level, partners to this effort might include such groups as the American Library Association, COSLA (representing state libraries), and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). At the state level, state libraries might be able to assume the responsibility. Some do this superbly now.

The format suggested in this report (pp. 62-65) is built around categories already in use at NCES and is worthy of consideration, but the essential need is for all players to use the same framework so that comparable data can be generated—and so that general reports about public libraries can see at a glance how adult literacy fits into their overall programs of public service.

Funding for the system would probably require a partnership of state and national sources and both

the public and private sectors.

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**RECOMMENDATION #8:**

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**Existing journals and newsletters of literacy and library organizations should give regular coverage to library literacy programs for the purpose of making their role and accomplishments more widely recognized.**

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**RECOMMENDATION #9:**

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**The ALA, the National Commission on Libraries & Information Science, COSLA, the voluntary organizations, and other leading groups should issue official resolutions giving consistent and unequivocal attention to the important role of public libraries in providing adult literacy services.**

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**RECOMMENDATION #10:**

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**A project should be launched to develop and disseminate information to local library literacy programs about good models of library literacy service.**

The new Lila Wallace Fund initiative will do

this very thing with the thirteen library literacy programs they have selected for their demonstration effort. But that effort will unfold slowly over three years and good information is needed now as a practical tool for advocates, program developers, and policy-makers. It could easily be developed. To start, many worthy candidates for inclusion in the project can be found among the 63 programs included in this study.

The ALA, the Center for the Book, the National Institute for Literacy, or the U.S. Department of Education could take the lead here.

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**RECOMMENDATION #11:**

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**As a national goal, the President, the Administration, and the Congress should commit to the wider use of technology in public libraries for the advancement of library literacy programs.**

The initiative would enable state libraries and local public library literacy programs to acquire hardware and software, and to develop the related technical and support staff

they need to improve their education and information services.

The initiative would be good for America and good for public libraries. Such a commitment would be consistent with action already taken to foster the greater use of technology in the schools. Some foundations have a strong interest in technology and could be a source of funding.

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**RECOMMENDATION #12:**

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**An appropriate national organization, or a collaboration of several, should undertake a project to gather and disseminate the information local library literacy programs need about effective uses of technology for both program management and instruction.**

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**RECOMMENDATION #13:**

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**Although computers, the Internet, and distance learning technology have great appeal and potential, their wider implementation should be adopted only after the most careful consideration of the benefits—in terms of individual learning, program outcomes,**

**economies of scale, and access.**

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**RECOMMENDATION #14:**

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**State and local public libraries should explore ways to expand space allocations for literacy programs or to find innovative space-sharing arrangements.**

New technology will require additional space and many programs are already overcrowded.

The development of mechanisms for sharing resources across communities and regions might be the answer in some cases.

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**RECOMMENDATION #15:**

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**A campaign of information and discussion should be launched to increase understanding throughout the field and in the political arena about the important role of public libraries in adult literacy. The campaign could be sponsored by established literacy and library groups.**

One strand of these activities might be for the U.S. Department of Education or the National

Institute for Literacy to organize discussions around this report at the regional, state, or local level. State education departments might be asked to join in.

Another strand could consist of panels and workshops incorporated into the regular conferences of such national groups as Literacy Volunteers of America, Laubach Literacy, and the ALA. State and regional meetings convened for and by the literacy and library fields would provide plenty of other opportunities.

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**RECOMMENDATION #16:**

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**At every level of the field, explorations should be made into how the much-needed greater degree of collaboration and cooperation can be achieved.**

Coordination efforts carry heavy staff and financial costs and place a heavy burden on library literacy programs. But they will be increasingly necessary as funding becomes tighter.

Local library literacy programs in particular cannot reasonably be ex-

pected to enter into new partnership arrangements without affordable options for doing it.

The alliances and action groups recommended above (#4, #5, and #6) should make this one of their highest priorities.

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**RECOMMENDATION #17:**

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**The U.S. Department of Education, the National Institute for Literacy, the National Coalition for Literacy, and others should join forces to impress upon Congress the immediacy of the need to restore funding for the valuable but endangered SLRCs—at the federal level, through state block earmarks, or both.**

Although SLRCs are not the central focus of this study, they are a crucial resource for public libraries and for everyone working at the state level to advance adult literacy.

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**RECOMMENDATION #18:**

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**The structure and legislated role of the SLRCs should be reviewed for the purpose of reconstituting them if necessary**

**to guarantee their future viability and effectiveness.**

One new approach to consider is suggested on pages 44-47 of this report.

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**RECOMMENDATION #19:**

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**The groups that would be formed and that are challenged to action by many of the above recommendations should shape a clearly-articulated definition of the purpose and role of public library adult literacy programs, seek agreement for it through wide consultations with local groups, and use the validated definition in a single voice to advance the public library role in adult literacy.**

This report contains the makings for that definition. But whatever definition is agreed on, four fundamental facts should stand at its core:

◆ Outside literacy programs acquire access to the basic reading collections and many other valuable resources of the library because the library provides sponsorship and space. Most of these resources are

generally minor items in a library's overall budget but they would be prohibitively expensive for small external programs on their own.

◆ The library culture is a uniquely user-friendly environment for adult learners and offers a flexible climate in which programs can be customized to meet their real life needs.

◆ Libraries are a fundamental cornerstone of knowledge and information. America and Americans gain in many concrete ways from the efforts of public libraries to help develop literate communities of users.

◆ Most important of all, in providing basic literacy services to adults with the least skills—

whether through their own tutoring or through the tutoring of the voluntary and CBO groups to which they provide a home—public libraries give educational access to the adults most in need of help, to people who either would not be served at all by schools and traditional ABE programs or could not be served by them effectively.



## APPENDIX A

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has come to fruition because many people offered friendship, support, and understanding when it was most needed. It would have been impossible without them.

Special thanks to Mary Keenan for her keen wit, and for her administrative and secretarial help. Diana Byer, having no knowledge of adult literacy, served as a reader on numerous occasions to test the report's readability and clarity. Wilma McCarley and Betsy Feist generously contributed their editorial and proofing services, and they were a source of many good ideas. Bess Heitner gave invaluable help with telephone interviewing. Harold McGraw, Jr., and Dan Lacy were unwavering in their trust, loyalty, and words of encouragement. They were also responsible for arranging the funding for this study.

John Cole of the Center for the Book must have wondered at times why it was all taking so long, but he and his staff showed unfailing good humor, patience, and flexibility from start to finish. Peggy Barber and staff of the ALA were prompt, thoughtful, and good natured about providing information.

Friendship, advice, and support also came from other sources, especially from McGraw-Hill. Sue Wallman's enthusiasm and helpfulness were a source of inspiration. Many McGraw-Hill staff were involved in maintaining telephone, mail, and copy services to go along with the space the company gave as a home for the project. Some of them were surprised to find strangers in their midst but they rose graciously to the occasion.

## APPENDIX B

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